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Have We Outgrown  
Religion?



# Have We Outgrown Religion?

by

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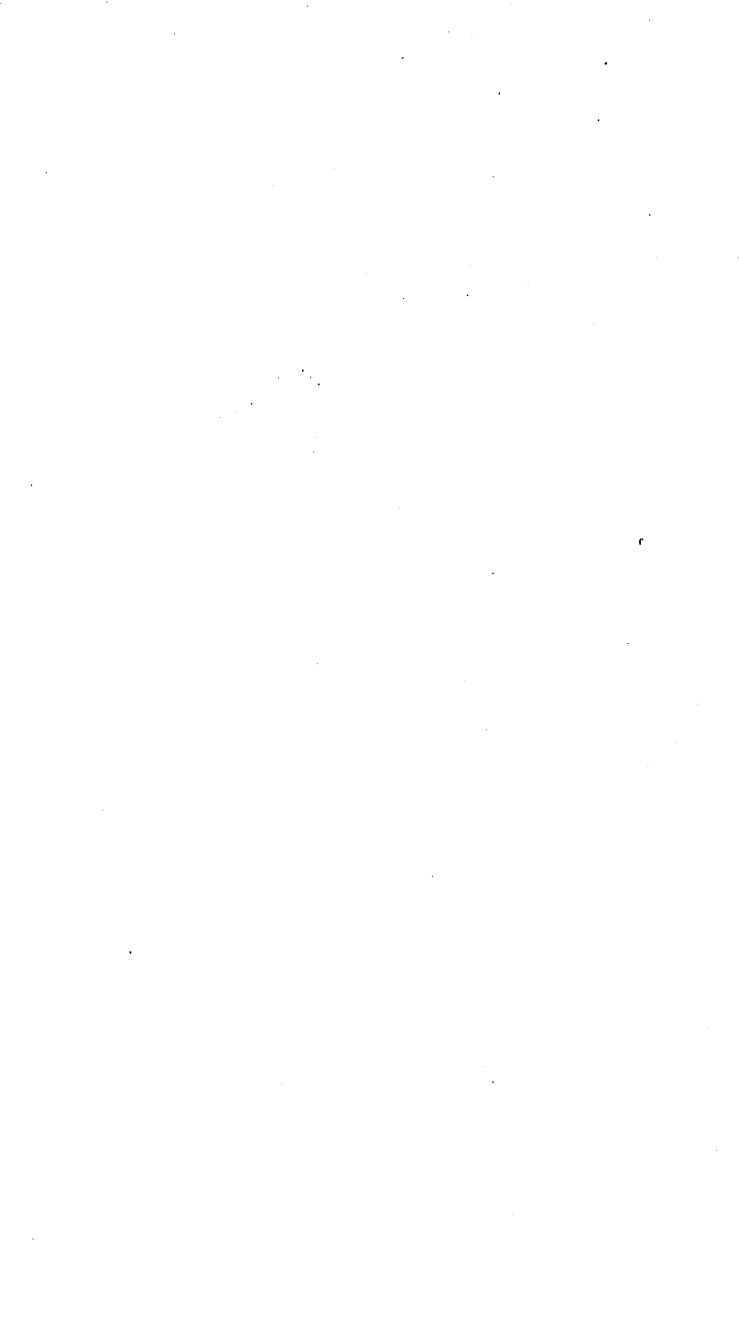
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## Foreword

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The material in these chapters has been used, much of it, in Battell Chapel at Yale University, and in other colleges—some of it has also been addressed to audiences more mature. When college students get their caps and gowns off, they are very much like other people, except that “other people” have lived longer, had wider experiences and are therefore more interesting.

The august business of undertaking to live as human beings is very much the same on the campus or off. The poet pitched the ball right over the plate, and neither too high nor too low, when he said:

The common problem—yours, mine, everyone’s—  
Is not to fancy what were fair in life,  
    Provided it could be,  
But finding first what may be,  
Then find how to make that fair  
    Up to our means.

We have to take the rough with the smooth, the dark days with the bright ones, the joys which are easy and the griefs which are hard, the doubts which dismay along with the beliefs which add courage. It all comes in the day's work—and taken aright, it is pretty much all to the good.

When we are faced toward some real goal and have a sound working philosophy of life, "all things," in the net result they yield, in their final outcome, "work together for good." This discussion as to just what we really want, and how much of it, for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, is meant to look in that direction.

I have used here several paragraphs from my lecture on "College Preaching" in the volume on *The Varieties of Present Day Preaching*, edited by G. Bromley Oxnam, published by The Abingdon Press, and they are printed here with their permission.

C. R. B.

Have We Outgrown  
Religion?



## I. Has the Modern World Outgrown Religion?

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We are being told these days that the modern world has outgrown religion. These friends do not say whether the modern world has grown too large for it, or too small, but at any rate they seem to feel that religion is no longer just the right size. There is nothing new about this—it is “old stuff.” We have been told for nineteen hundred years that the world has outgrown the religion of Christ, yet that religion is still very much in evidence.

When the Master himself was here, there came a day when these strange words fell upon his ears—“What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Let us alone!” “What have we to do with thee”—who were the “we”? They were “unclean spirits,” as they are called in the New

Testament. When some man showed signs of what we call insanity, these simple-hearted Galileans, unused to any kind of careful diagnosis and puzzled beyond measure by those strange nervous and mental maladies which baffle medical science to this hour, decided that the sufferer had been overborne by some hostile personality. "He has a devil." "He has unclean spirits."

That man of Gadara roamed about in the mountains and among the tombs "cutting himself on the stones." He went naked—"wore no clothes." "He was crying out day and night." "He was exceeding fierce, so that no man dared pass that way." He showed an ungovernable strength—"Men had bound him with fetters and chains," but he always broke away. When Jesus asked him his name, the poor fellow answered in wild, incoherent fashion, "Legion! Legion!" He felt that a whole legion of devils had taken up their abode in his troubled nature. We call such a man insane. It was a disordered mind which said to the Highest and Holiest Being who ever walked this earth, "What have we to do with thee?"

What had they to do with each other? What had they in common? For that matter, to be

quite frank about it, how much have we in common with Him? How far can we join the yarn of our ordinary way of life onto the yarn of his teaching and his mode of life? How far do they match?

When J. A. Spender, an eminent British journalist, was over here a few years ago lecturing at Yale, he propounded this question, "How far can the Christian ethic be absorbed into this immensely energetic, acquisitive, worldly life of a very prosperous people? Can that kingdom, which is not of this world, hold its own in this actual world of wealth and power?"

It is a pertinent question. I wonder if it can? How has that kingdom, which is not eating and drinking, buying and selling, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the divine spirit, been faring recently? Has it been coming or receding? Have we been advancing into a more complete agreement with the spirit and method of Jesus, or have we been headed in the opposite direction? How much have the people of America in common with him? Do we ever feel that his ideas are rather out of date?

When we stop to think about it, how strange it is that Jesus of Nazareth should be the acknowledged Lord and Master of this rich, rush-



ing, Western world of ours. The Chinese naturally accepted the teachings of Confucius. China produced him. He and the Chinese all belonged to the same lodge. The people of India naturally accepted the teachings of Gautama Buddha, even as they respond to the appeal of the simple, self-denying Gandhi. They all speak the same language and have the same point of view.

But for us to go out of our way to find one of another race, another language, another mode of life altogether, in little out-of-the-way Palestine, and exalt him to be our Lord and Master, is amazing. He was so poor. He was born in a manger, lived as a peasant, died on a cross, was buried in a borrowed tomb. Yet here is the richest nation on earth, self-confident, self-reliant, self-indulgent, insisting that he is "the King of kings and Lord of lords," that before his mode of life every knee at last must bow. How amazing all that is!

Here are the Christian nations of the world, vastly superior to the non-Christian nations in armies, in navies, in military aeroplanes, in all the appliances for killing people. With the single exception of Japan, it is scarcely worth while to mention any of the non-Christian nations in reckoning up the fighting forces of earth. Yet it was

our Master rather than theirs, the Lord and Master of Christendom, who went about preaching "peace on earth and good will toward men." He said, "I came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

Then that other contrast in the matter of wealth! It was our Master rather than theirs, who said, "It is more blessed to give than to get. A man's life does not consist in the number of things that he has. Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth. How hardly shall they that have great riches enter the kingdom of God." Can we wonder that many people still look up to him, and say, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth?"

When some "self-made man," as he likes to call himself—thereby relieving the Creator from a certain embarrassment, rewrites the Apostle's Creed, making it modern and practical, bringing it up to date and in line with things as they are, it reads usually something like this: "I believe in the Almighty Dollar, maker of every thing that is worth while. I believe in piling on all the traffic will bear, buying in the cheapest market, selling in the dearest—that is good business. I believe in hiring people for the least they can be induced

to take and charging all I can get—that means profit. I believe in keeping my eye on the main chance and looking out for Number One—if I don't, who will?" Naturally, he does not say all that in so many words—that would be ill-bred and inexpedient. He says it, however, oftentimes, in those habits of thought and ways of life which speak louder than creeds.

Well, what has a man who builds on that philosophy of life seven days in the week, to do with the One who said, "He that saves his life, loses it. What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world of things and then lose out on himself in the quality of life he shows? What shall a man give in exchange for that sense of peace and worth and joy in his own inner life?" How different he was from the "go-getter" the "live wire," the man who is "always right there with the goods." Whenever those two modes of life are brought face to face, we hear again that same hoarse cry from disordered minds, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Let us alone!"

"Are religious people fooling themselves?" Harry Emerson Fosdick asks in the title of one of the chapters in his recent book. Are they fool-

ing themselves in thinking that they are the objects of a divine care and that they are coöperating with Him in the fulfillment of a vast, beneficent purpose? Harry Elmer Barnes, formerly a professor in Smith College but now engaged in writing furiously and anxiously for the newspapers, thinks religious people are fooling themselves. "Astronomically," he says, "man is almost totally negligible." He is just a tiny parasite on a mere speck of a globe in a universe whose vastness we have learned to measure by light years.

Then George A. Coe quietly reminded him that "Astronomically speaking, man's the astronomer." Our whole knowledge of the universe, the vastness of it, the content of it, the meaning of it, is the work of man's mind—our very knowledge of the fact that there is a universe, is the work of man's mind. What are atoms and electrons? What are planets and fixed stars, if you please, compared with an intelligent, self-conscious, self-directing being, standing over against all that, studying it, measuring it, appraising it, interpreting it, yet knowing all the while that he is superior to it? He can think and feel and aspire and adore and love, as all that mass of material, how-

ever vast, cannot. Let's get our scale of values right—bulk is not the primary consideration.

I am well aware that there are those who question all this. Certain psychologists, who have not lived very long nor grown very tall, have been telling us recently that the whole idea of God is just moonshine, that there is no such person, that the whole notion of God is just a "defense mechanism" conjured up by certain people to make human life seem a bit more comfortable than it really is.

"A defense mechanism"—what a phrase and what a claim! How would it work in actual life to go about substituting that phrase for the idea of God? Look out at this marvelous universe where we find ourselves, and say, "In the beginning, a defense mechanism created the heavens and the earth." Go out on a clear night and look up at the sky, studded and jeweled with its countless stars, and say, "The heavens declare the glory of a defense mechanism and the firmament showeth its handiwork." Go to people in sorrow, a man whose wife has just died or a mother who has lost her child, and say to them, "A defense mechanism is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble." Even those psychologists would not be able to say it and keep their

faces straight. The psychologists have a sense of humor like the rest of us.

The final test of all these claims which are made for religion is to be found in experience. Try it. Taste and see. Test religion on the palate of your own inner life. The Psalmist in selecting a figure of speech to indicate his sense of the value of personal religious experience, chose the most intimate of all the five senses, the sense of taste. We can see all manner of objects, and feel all sorts of things with which we come in contact, yet they remain external to us. We can hear all manner of sounds and smell all sorts of odors, which remain in the air about us. But you cannot taste a thing until you have taken it into yourself, until it is actually in process of becoming a part of your own inner life. "O taste and see that the Lord is good—blessed is the man that trusteth in Him."

There are many things which I know by personal experience. No one can tell me that fire does not burn—I have been burned. No one can tell me that the fragrance of a hayfield freshly mown is not delicious—I was brought up on a farm and I know. No one can tell me that the Matterhorn, and the Taj Mahal in India, and Fujiyama in

Japan are not inspiring sights—I have seen them all and I know. Neither can anyone tell me that there does not come an immense accession of spiritual dynamic for the living of a right life through faith in Jesus Christ and by the habit of prayer—I have been praying for more than sixty years. No one can get up any argument with me on any of those points—I have first-hand knowledge.

I never urge anyone to believe in the great spiritual objectives because the Bible says so, or because the Church says so. I ceased many years ago to believe in any form of religion which rests its claims on external authority. That does not get us anywhere. It was not the method of Jesus. When some fellow said to him in flippant fashion, "What have I to do with you?" Jesus did not scold the man. He said to him, "Come and see. Follow me." "He took him out for a walk" as Halford Luccock put it, inviting him to look at his own mode of life and the truth he taught from all its possible angles. "Follow me" into a certain personal relationship higher than anything you have ever known. Then the man would know. One can easily put two and two together and make four of it in the world of things. Put two and two

together and make four of it in that realm of values which entirely transcends the multiplication table.

The very fact that we find in ourselves this capacity for awe and worship suggests that there may be Some One before whom we may well stand in trust and aspiration. The very fact that all normal people—I am not now thinking about the freaks—feel at times that same craving for the sense of fellowship with Some One higher and holier than we are, suggests that there may be such an One to be found. Somehow this great natural order, seen and unseen, which enfolds us, has a way of keeping faith with these normal, widespread, persistent desires, holding in store the corresponding satisfaction for each one. If all men hunger, there is food for them. If they all want to breathe, there is fresh air in abundance. If they all have the instinct of sex, there is another sex standing near with corresponding instincts. If they all have the desire for knowledge and the love of beauty, there is an ordered universe and a world of beauty awaiting the approach of intelligence and artistic appreciation. Why not trust the natural order as regards these spiritual impulses of ours? Does anyone believe



that it was only a pathetic delusion which led the wisest and best of men to look up and say, "I am not alone—the Father is with me."

It is a disordered mind which looks upon Jesus Christ and his gospel, only to say, "What has all that to do with me?" It has everything to do with me, and with you, and with every normal person. We were meant for all that, and all that was meant for us. He made us for himself, and our hearts are restless and so is his, until they rest in him. His truth sustains a most vital relation to all human well-being, personal and social. If anyone doubts it, let him try it.

What do we think of a man who faces rainbows and sunsets, the awful grandeur of the ocean in a storm or the lovely autumn colors on our hill-sides (when they look as if a thousand sunsets had gone to wreck in the treetops), saying to himself, "What is all that to me?" What would we think of a man who looked upon the paintings of Raphael and Rembrandt, or who sat listening to some superb orchestra playing Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" or some magnificent chorus singing "The Messiah," saying, "What has all that to do with me?" What would we think of a man

who turned the pages of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam* or Goethe's *Tragedy of Faust*, saying, "What do I care about all that?"

We would say at once, "He is a moron. He is abnormal. He is incomplete. He is 'not all there.' " If he finds nothing in himself which responds to those varied forms of appeal, it does not condemn the ocean and the sky; it does not condemn the artists, the writers and the musicians, but it does everlastingly condemn him.

What then shall we think of the man who reads the nineteenth Psalm or the Sermon on the Mount, the Hymn of Love in Corinthians or the Parable of a Lost Boy, unmoved? What shall we think of the man who follows through this story of One who so lived that his life became the light of men, saying, "What has all that to do with the life I propose to live?" What shall we think of all those people who look with cold-hearted indifference upon the One who gave himself for the moral recovery of others, praying for his enemies when they were putting him to death on the cross? "Is all this nothing to you who pass by?" Is it possible that you and I and that man yonder in the street could be so queer and so remote, so narrow-minded and so lacking in our common

humanity, that all these high privileges of religion would have nothing to offer us? It seems unthinkable.

But we are told that the modern world has outgrown all that,—it belongs only to a past age of credulity and superstition,—that science has taken the place of religion. We are all profoundly grateful for the splendid achievements of modern science. We have no quarrel with all that—why should we have? How much it has added to our comfort and our privileges! How it has reduced the volume of pain and disease! How it has widened our horizons and added to the efficiency of human effort! We thank God upon every remembrance of the magnificent advance in scientific knowledge.

But it must be borne in mind all the while, that physical science moves in a realm and deals with facts and forces which leave out of the account those values which are supreme and lasting, those values which are distinctively and permanently human. Science discovers and improves and sharpens the tools, but the final outcome is determined mainly by the quality of purpose which wields the tools, by the spiritual forces back of them.

Here in my hand I hold a knife made of the finest tempered steel. It has an edge on it like that of a razor. Science taught us how to make steel and how to fashion it into all manner of useful instruments. The knife, however, has no power in itself for good or for ill—it all depends upon the purpose which wields it. In the hands of a surgeon, skilled and conscientious, it may be used to save life. It is being so used in all the hospitals. In the hands of a madman or a criminal, the same knife may just as readily be used to destroy life.

All this material, all these resources laid ready to our hands, all the machinery, of what we lightly call "civilization," are only tools. What they accomplish depends upon the quality of purpose which wields them. If they are wielded by greed, by fear, by ill will, they may be used to destroy all that man holds dear. The World War gave us a frightful "close-up" of the possibilities along that line. If, on the other hand, they are wielded by the spirit of friendliness, of coöperation, of devotion to high ends, they may be used to build that finer social order which will be like the city John saw descending out of heaven as beautiful as a bride. The final forces in human society are the spiritual

forces, and it is the work of religion to keep those forces strong and clean and kind.

Where do we find the answer to those deeper questions of life in the presence of which the whole realm of sense-phenomena is but a moving picture show? Where do people turn when they are in dire need? "Here is a woman in sorrow," as Charles E. Jefferson once said; "she has lost her child. Tell her that science has invented the aeroplane by which she can mount up into the sky twenty thousand feet or fly from New York to San Francisco at the rate of two hundred miles an hour. She looks at you sadly, and says, 'What good would that do? No matter how high I fly or how fast I travel, my grief goes with me. There is no comfort for me in that.'"

Here is a man who felt that he was comfortably settled on the sunny side of Easy Street for the rest of his days. But financial reverses, continued ill health, domestic troubles, have stripped away his sense of security and left him struggling. He is so wretched that he is saying, "What's the use! Why shouldn't I turn on the gas, or blow out my brains with a pistol, or fling myself out of the tenth story window of a hotel, and end it all?" Tell him that science has discovered the X-ray,

whereby an expert can see right through his clothing, right through his flesh, and study all the hidden processes of his bodily organism. He shakes his head and replies, "What good would that do? Though I were X-rayed a hundred times, would that show me the meaning of life or furnish me with a reason and courage to go on?"

Here is a young man who is tempted to do wrong. It may be by the coarse sins of the flesh, or it may be by the more subtle sins of selfishness and greed, moral indifference and a cynical outlook upon life. He knows full well, when he looks at himself in the glass, that he is singing his life song in a lower key than it was meant to be sung. Tell him that science has discovered radio, which will bring all the sounds of earth into his own home. He can sit there in his den in his own hometown and hear an orchestra playing in New York or in San Francisco; he can hear the King of England speaking in London, or the Pope at Rome talking in the Vatican. He smiles and says, "How would that help me? Would that change my heart? Would that impel me and enable me to live a real life?"

More appliances, finer machinery, sharper tools? No! A new spirit within! All those people want religion. Their hearts are crying out, some-

times silently, sometimes audibly, for the Living God. They want that which will enable them not to be conformed to this world, and not to go down in defeat in the face of its difficulties. They want to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove for themselves what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Go back where we started, to that man of Gadara! When he had a disordered mind, he roamed about naked in the mountains, crying out and cutting himself on the stones. But when he had been restored by the power of Christ, "the people found him clothed and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus." He was sitting in a good place and in another mood altogether. He had discovered for himself that relationship higher than anything he had ever known and he was waiting there for its further development. He was not now saying to the Son of Man, "What have I to do with Thee?" He might well have been saying what the great apostle said at a later period: "I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him. And I am confident that neither life nor death, things present nor

things to come, nor height nor depth nor anything else, can ever separate me from the love of God." And that is what religion has for everyone in this modern world, the moment he stands ready to claim it.



## 2. How Can We Make Religion Real?

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We are constantly meeting people who feel that religion is not real as art, music and literature, as education, business and politics are real. There is something tangible about these other interests—something which our hands and eyes and minds can easily grasp. But to many people religion seems vague and shadowy—all up in the air. We are told that to many of the younger generation religion seems so utterly unreal that it has no influence whatever upon their lives.

I fear that in many cases this is true, and for my own part, I feel thoroughly ashamed—not so much ashamed of the young people as ashamed of ourselves as Christians. We must have fallen down somewhere. We must have failed to make good in our own Christian lives, else the young people would not feel that way. What can we do

about it? What can we do to restore religion to its rightful place of honor, of interest and of power?

My own mind turns to those potent suggestions made in the preface to the Fourth Gospel. It has been called "the best bit of philosophical writing to be found anywhere in the Bible." When we study it carefully, reading between the lines and beneath the surface, it does seem to get down to bed rock. An old friend of mine in California, Raymond C. Brooks, once made an interesting paraphrase of it, bringing out its deeper meaning in more modern terms. His version of it read like this:

In the beginning was the IDEA, and the IDEA was with God, and the IDEA was divine. All things were made in pursuance of that IDEA and without It nothing was made. The IDEA was the Sustaining Substance, the Inner Reality of all that was made.

The IDEA became alive and the Life was the Light of men, the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The IDEA was made flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. No man hath seen God at any time, but no man having once seen that Life full of grace and truth can fail to catch the IDEA.

How can we make religion real? "The Idea of

religion became alive"—there we have it. If we should ransack all the libraries on earth, could we find anywhere a clearer statement of the best method for making religion real? The words themselves are as real as granite. The process they suggest is much more real than granite, because it moves in a realm of being which granite knows not of. The Idea of religion became alive and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.

It is easy to outline religious beliefs in words. This has been done in the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Westminster Confession, and other familiar formulas. But to the ears of many people, all those words sound unreal. It is easy to indicate certain phases of religion by the use of symbols, ceremonies and sacraments. But to the eyes of many people, all that seems artificial. It is easy to organize the forces of religion into certain polities, as we find them in the various branches of the Christian Church. Yet to many people, all this discussion about polity and orders, whether a minister should be ordained by a bishop, or by a company of elders, or by a group of his fellow pastors, does not seem vital. But once let the idea of religion become alive and move about among

us full of grace and truth, and there is something which the ordinary mind can grasp.

What made Francis of Assisi and John Wesley, David Livingstone and Edward Everett Hale, each man in his own place and time, a power for good? All these men had their personal beliefs, and they covered a wide range of religious opinion. All these men worshiped according to their different methods, and it was a far cry from the full-orbed worship of the Roman Catholic Church which St. Francis loved to the simple observances of Edward Everett Hale. All these men were members of the Christian Church: Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Unitarian. But there was something about them which went far beyond all that. It was the fact that in each one of those men, whether in Italy or in England, in Africa or in America, the idea of religion became alive and expressed itself in upright, useful, unselfish action, which made that man a power for good. What Canon Raven said about the early Christians at Rome could be said with equal fitness about these four men—"It was not their cultus, it was not even their message that surprised the world and commended the Christ; it was the beauty and sincerity and goodness of their lives. A new kind of life and a new conception of God are

the possessions which most impressed the onlooker.”<sup>1</sup>

What made Jesus Christ himself a power for good? He has changed the lives of men as none other ever has in the whole history of the race. He too had his religious beliefs, and they stand declared on the pages of the New Testament in clear-cut terms. He too worshiped according to the usage of his own day. “He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day as his custom was” and one of the last things he did was to establish the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He too organized his life with the lives of his fellow believers—he was a member of the Jewish Church in good and regular standing. But all that does not account for his influence—all that was secondary.

If we had not gone so far toward making him a stained-glass window, a marble statue, a page of print in a book which most men seldom read! If we could only see him as he was, flesh and blood, warm, real, alive, our hearts would leap as did the hearts of those Galileans. We too would be crying out, “We never saw it on this fashion. Is not this the Messiah, the Saviour of the world?” The whole idea of religion was once just a blue print in the mind of the Father. When that

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus and the Gospel of Love*, p. 234.

Idea of religion became alive and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, the blue print was translated into an imposing, transforming Reality.

Here we touch the very heart of the work of redemption. When God so loved the world as to undertake the saving of men from the guilt, the stain and the love of doing wrong, the Idea of moral recovery took upon itself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. It came down in that One Outstanding Life in Palestine "across whose acres," as the poet said, "walked those blessed feet which nineteen hundred years ago were nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross." How intensely real all that became when He went about saying, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." He actually restored to the lives of men that which had been lost out of them, by the impact of his own life upon theirs.

He sought to extend that method, making it universal and permanent. "As the Father hath sent me, I send you," he said to his disciples. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." The whole way between the highest form of divine help and the farthest reach of human need, was to be

bridged by devoted flesh and blood. When the idea of moral recovery becomes alive, men's hearts are changed.

We are told that Auguste Comte, the French philosopher, was once talking with Thomas Carlyle, the Scotch philosopher. The Frenchman told the Scotchman that he proposed to start a new religion which would entirely supplant the religion of Christ. There were to be no mysteries in it—it would all be as plain as the multiplication table. It was to be called "Positivism."

"Very good, Mr. Comte," Carlyle replied, "very good! All you will need to do will be to speak as never man spake, and live as he lived, and be crucified, and rise again the third day, and get the world to believe that you are still alive. Then your new religion will have a chance to get on."

Needless to say, "Mr. Comte" never carried out that program. Today only a few philosophers here and there know who Auguste Comte was. If almost anyone, outside the field of philosophy, were suddenly asked to define Positivism, he would probably have to go and look it up in the encyclopedia. In the meantime, the gospel of One in whom the idea of personal fellowship between these finite spirits of ours and the Infinite Spirit

of him who is above all, became alive, has gone on widening and deepening its influence for good in all the lands on earth.

How much more important life is than all forms and theories. We are often told that the Christian religion has no advantage over the Jewish religion, because many of its precepts are to be found in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures; that indeed the two great commandments which Christ gave—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—are in the Old Testament.

So they are. But the advantage which the Christian religion has over all that preceded it lies in the fact that Jesus Christ actually did it. He loved God with all his heart, and men felt that it was so. He was so much like their conception of the Eternal Father that men saw in his face the glory of God. He loved his neighbor in the same personal, practical way that he loved himself, and men saw it. He gave himself for us in such a way as to raise love to the *n*th power. In him all the great ideas of religion became alive—it was the incarnation of the truth he taught in his own practice, which gave him a power which none of the great prophets of his race ever attained.



What a great, big human being Dwight L. Moody, the nineteenth century evangelist, was! He was conservative in his own theological beliefs. He believed in the Virgin Birth, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the Inerrancy of the Scriptures. He believed in a Substitutional Atonement and in a speedy, visible Second Coming of Christ. Yet for all that he was so broad-minded in his practice that he invited liberals, like Henry Drummond and George Adam Smith, to speak at his Northfield Conferences. Henry Drummond spoke there once just after he had been giving his Lowell Institute Lectures on "Evolution" in Boston.

Mr. Moody was taken to task for it by one of his conservative supporters. "How can you invite that man Drummond to Northfield, when he thinks that we are all descended from the monkeys?" "Well," Moody replied, "I cannot say that I agree with all his notions, but he is more like Jesus Christ than any man I know, and that is the reason why I want him at Northfield."

The spirit and method of the Master had become alive in Henry Drummond. He took Christian character and set it to music and it sang the same song which the morning stars sang together in that high hour when all the sons of God shouted for joy. That was enough for Moody, as

it was, undoubtedly, for Moody's Master. "Not every one who says, Lord, Lord, but he that does the will of the Father, shall enter the kingdom."

"Full of grace" as well as truth! Winsome in its approach as well as sound to the core! What a tragedy it is, where religion is caricatured and made to appear dull and drab, pale and thin. Where men are honest, because honesty is the best policy! Where they tell the truth, because they are afraid of being found out as liars! Where they live clean, because they dread the consequences, physical and social, of doing what they really want to do! Where they perform kind deeds occasionally, because it feels nice to receive the applause of men!

And all those people whose goodness is dry, prosy, commonplace! Never a splendid outburst of generosity in it! None of that chivalry which leads men to stake everything on fidelity to principle! None of that sporting element, that spirit of moral adventure, which impels a man, as Donald Hankey said, to "bet his life that there is a God," and that He is a God of love, and that He is "the rewarder of them that diligently seek him"! All such people are the enemies of true religion. They are guilty of high crimes and mis-

demeanors against the kingdom of God. They ought to be shut up somewhere for caricaturing goodness, until they learn to do better. The Idea of Religion does not become alive in them and move about "full of grace."

"Dwelt among us!" The word used is suggestive. It means literally "tabernacled, tented, camped out" with us. It looked back to those days when the Israelites came out of Egypt and wandered in the Wilderness on their way to the Land of Promise. Their place of worship had to be a portable structure, a tent, which could be taken down in the morning and carried along on the day's march, to be set up again when they made camp.

They took with them wherever they went that tent, which was to them the visible symbol of the Divine Presence. The Divine Presence was with them when they were good and when they were bad, when they were faithful and when they were disobedient, because then they needed Him all the more. And they learned by joyous experience that "the angel of the divine presence saved them."

What can we do about it, you and I and all those other people who are trying to be religious?

What can we do to make religion real to an age which feels that it is all so mysterious and quite remote from the interests of daily life? I know of nothing better than to undertake to show the world some, some of our own, some of our very own, some real honest-to-goodness, seven-day-in-the-week religion.

The best service one can render to the cause of music is not to go about scolding people because they like jazz, or arguing with them at great length to convince them that Beethoven and Bach, Schubert and Brahms were great composers. That would not accomplish anything. The best thing one can do is to learn to sing a little of it or to play a little of it in such a way that people will listen and feel something of the power, the meaning, the beauty of real music. Do it! Do it yourself—it is the only way.

The same sound principle applies to religion. Live it! Live it yourself! We are not all of us able to play or to sing. We might not be able to contribute much to the rendering of the "Fifth Symphony" or to the singing of "The Messiah," but we can all learn to live. And religion is just that—it is living. It is living out one's true, best, complete self, rather than some poor, sorry substitute for one's self. The pathetic fact about ir-

religious people generally is not that they are so wicked—oftentimes they have not sufficient resources to be that. The pathetic fact about them is that their lives are so meager, so dull and so dead. They have not enough interesting things to think about, or to talk about, or to strive after, to make them alive. Religion is living.

One could apply that principle even more broadly. Being good is living—the other line of conduct is dying, by inches or by yards as the case may be. It is dying at the top, dying at the heart, dying to those values which have the highest worth. “The wages of sin is death”; final and complete it may be for anything we know to the contrary, while “the gift of God” on the other hand “is life eternal.” “This do,” Jesus said, having in mind the things he had just been telling them, “and thou shalt live.” “I am come that ye might have life”—life that is life indeed, life to the full, life that lasts. He was gloriously alive, and he would make us branches of that True Vine. If we maintain our sense of union with him, all those fine fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, mildness, self-control, grow out of us, as they grew out of him.

When he sat there eating the Last Supper with

his disciples the night he was betrayed, he said to them, "I have given you something." It was not money—he did not have any money. It was not fame—the One who was born in a manger and buried in a borrowed tomb gave no thought to that. It was not an appointment to some high office—it did not lie within his power to set men on the right hand of authority, as he was sometimes asked to do. It was something of vastly more worth than all that. "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done. Love one another, as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." When we line up with him and carry on, the Idea of Religion which was in the beginning with God and was itself divine becomes alive in us, and moves about full of grace. That makes religion real.

### 3. Getting Started

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There came a day when the Israelites were entering the Land of Promise. It was to be the home of their race for the next three thousand years. It is still their home. For long periods, the Jew has been "a man without a country." Ever since the days of Abraham, Palestine has been the only land which the Hebrew race has owned and ruled.

The Israelites had traversed the Wilderness and had crossed the river Jordan. They had passed their entrance examinations and were "admitted." Now that fair field of opportunity, to which their minds had been turning for many years, stretched out before their eyes. They were tremendously happy about it. They felt as if the whole world was theirs. And in that high hour, they heard a voice from the unseen saying to

them, "You have not passed this way heretofore." They were making a fresh start in life.

When the autumn days come, there appears on every college campus in the land a new swarm of boys or girls who are making in their turn "a fresh start in life." It was Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who lived so many years in Cambridge, watching the tides of Harvard ebb and flow, who said, "The boys with smooth, unworn faces, full of the zest of their own being, take the whole world as having been made for them, as indeed it was. Their visible self-confidence is well-founded and has the facts on its side. The future is theirs to command—it belongs to them even more than they think it does, and this is undoubtedly saying a good deal."

It is a new experience for them—they "have not passed this way heretofore." The significance of the first year in college can scarcely be overstated. It is a time when freedom and responsibility are handed out in thick slices. College men, as a rule, are away from home. There is no one at hand to ask, with the accent of authority, how they spend their evenings, who their intimates are, or what sort of habits they are forming. Studying is not now done under the eye of an instructor, as



in grammar-school days. The wholesome restraints of well-ordered family life, or of a rightly conducted preparatory school, are gone. The young man feels that he is "on his own," a free citizen in the Republic of Letters.

This larger measure of liberty has immense possibilities in it but it also involves a certain risk. The freshman may decide the case against himself before he gets within striking distance of his sophomore year. The bad plays of the first inning may be so numerous and so serious as to lose the game. The way is open for him to go to the devil if he chooses, physically and mentally, socially and morally. The way is open and the bars are down. As often as not some young fool is just starting and beckoning to his comrades to "Come along." It is a time for every young chap to watch his step and know where he is going, and why he is going there.

The same high significance attaches to the choices made by those young people who have left college, entered upon their vocations, gotten married and are now laying the foundations for domestic happiness—or unhappiness—and making themselves a part of the community life where they are set down. It is a new and vital experience for them—they too "have not passed this

way heretofore." It may be that they are entering into a land of promise, or it may just as easily be, they are headed straight for a long period of wandering to and fro in a wilderness of disappointment.

There are four important choices which the young college man has to make :

First, the choice of subjects to be studied. The modern tendency is to allow each student to study only what he likes. This has its good points and it has also points which are not so good. Even at the mature age of eighteen it is just possible that somewhere on earth more wisdom can be found as to what is best for one's personal development than that which ordinarily resides in his own preferences at that stage of his growth. We are likely to select courses of two kinds, those in which we are already strong and those which are supposed to be "snap courses." In either case it means following the line of least resistance, which is not commonly the royal road to anything in particular. Strolling along an easy slope on green grass is a pleasant exercise, but robust enduring manhood is developed more surely by climbing Mt. Shasta or the Matterhorn over loose rock and rugged snow fields. There may be such a thing as

"Painless Dentistry"—I have seen it advertised, though I have never found any of it myself—but I am sure that there is no such thing as painless education. Insight, grasp, self-mastery, adequacy to the tasks which lie ahead, come by doing jobs which are hard. College life is not meant to be a rest cure.

Many people are wondering how wise it is to have at one end of our educational system the kindergarten (bowing down with almost idolatrous reverence before the untaught inclinations of the little child, who may have been spoiled already by the featherbed methods of a badly ordered home life) and at the other end such a wide-open system of electives as to breed a certain distaste for all those courses which young people do not find "intriguing," to use their own pet phrase. The attempt to make the whole of life a pretty little game is doomed to defeat. Where the way that goeth upward is made too easy by the humoring of our own whims, it does not go upward. It goes in just the opposite direction.

Mr. Dooley once said, "In some colleges these days, the Dean takes the young man into a Turkish room and gives him a cigarette and says to him, 'Now, my dear boy, what particular branch of learning would you like to have studied for

you by one of our competent professors?" "It is never quite like that, of course—if it were, it would be a calamity of the first order.

The young man in college had best not specialize too early nor too rigidly. He will have to specialize later in order to get ahead, but not too soon. He is building a pyramid. It must come to a point somewhere, here, or here, or there. With conditions as they are, one can only build it at a certain angle—material will not lie on too steep a slope. How high up the man will be when the apex is reached, will depend upon the breadth of the base. He is not in college primarily to gain a certain added facility for making money—he is there to develop personality and character. How high up the apex of his personality will reach, and how ample will be the content of the structure he rears, depends upon the sort of foundation he lays. He may well avoid too much narrow specialization in those earlier years.

Here are certain broad interests which cannot be left out of the life of any educated man or woman—they lie in five main fields:

Every one should know something of language, the universal instrument of communication. For purposes of comparison and enrichment, he had best know something of several languages, and

something about the best literature in each one of them. His widest knowledge naturally will be of the best things which have been said in his own tongue.

He should know something about history. There is too much of it for any one mind to master it all (though H. G. Wells has attempted it), but he can know something about the chief sources of history and about the great main movements of thought and life in the past. He needs to enlarge his own brief, local experience by a sense of participation in age-long, national and international affairs.

He should know something of science. The general method of science is much the same in physics or in chemistry, in geology, biology or botany. One may never become a specialist in any of those sciences, but some general knowledge of the scientific method and the scientific habit of mind will have immense value for him in his own chosen field whatever it may be.

He needs to know something of the organized life of man through his study of sociology, economics, civics. He will thus gain some real appreciation of the institutional life of the race, as it finds expression in social and domestic, industrial and political relations.

He should also feel the power of that group of studies which deal with mental and spiritual processes considered quite apart from the world of physical phenomena. Psychology and ethics, philosophy and religion! He needs to relate his own individual life to the larger life of the whole, by some sort of grasp upon fundamental principles in his thinking.

What is here said of the college student can be applied with equal force and pertinency to that vaster company of people who are just getting fairly started in the high task of living lives worthy to be called human. Language, history, science, the social order and the inner life! No one can be at his best in all of them, nor can he make any two or three of them his main concern, but some elementary knowledge of them all, honest and thorough as far as it goes, will be a much better preparation for the business of living a real life than any amount of narrow specialization in some lesser field.

For all the younger people who are getting under way, there is the choice of habits. In any modern college or university, these are left almost entirely to the taste and judgment of the individual student. College rules grow fewer and sim-

pler year by year. With the enrolment mounting up into the thousands in many institutions, personal supervision comes to be out of the question. College presidents sometimes entertain each other with amusing stories about oversolicitous parents. It would be difficult for Mr. Lowell or Mr. Angell, Mr. Hibben or Mr. Butler, to see to it personally that all the boys eat the proper amounts of food, with the right percentage of the various vitamins, and put on their mackintoshes when it rains. College life is not a personally conducted tour, where the members of the party are led about hen-and-chickens fashion, with all the trains and hotels, points of interest and suggestions as to clothing, printed in the schedule. It is a case of each man going abroad upon the continent of learning, relying upon his own letter of credit to draw the necessary supplies from the Bank of Opportunity in such a way as to get the most out of his trip.

The young man comes upon the campus "a maverick," as cattlemen say in Wyoming. There is no brand on him. His associates wait to see where he belongs. By the habits he shows in his first year, he speedily brands himself. He comes to be known as studious or trifling, as thorough or a dabbler, as honest or a cheat, as sound and

clean in his way of life or shady. He will find that in the award of honors, both at the hands of the faculty and at the hands of his fellow students, the brand he shows in those earlier months will have a decisive influence. He had best look it over carefully before he applies it to himself, for the mark will stay. He had best not allow himself to drop into certain habits, as if he were just a piece of something thrown out of the window—let him choose them with his eyes open and by the exercise of sound judgment.

There comes also the choice of intimates. He will have acquaintances, many of them, the more the better. Every man should have a host of friends, and he will find that college friendships are the most lasting (and perhaps the most rewarding) of any that we ever form. But of those lives which come so close to us as to give shape, color, odor, to our own natures, there will not be many. Only a few—and for that reason those intimates are to be chosen with all the more care.

The young fellow, in college or out, will know all sorts and conditions of men. In many cases their prevailing attitudes may or may not match his own. He cannot afford to be on really intimate terms with any fellow who lacks those funda-



mental qualities of ordinary rectitude which are legal tender the world over. The man he takes into his own life should be "hall-marked" (as they say in England) or have the word "sterling" (as we say in this country) stamped on him. That will mean that in the great melting pot of future experience, he will meet the test and show full face value.

The young fellow on the campus needs a few close friends who are not students. There are townspeople, any number of them young and old, who are well worth knowing. It is a great mistake to regard them as just so much furniture. There are members of the faculty who covet a closer relation with students, if only the young fellows did not so frequently shy off at their approach. It is downright silly to look upon the professor as "the common enemy," or as lacking in any genuine interest in his students. The fact that some weak-kneed men undertake to "cultivate the prof" in lickspittle fashion need not deter strong men from the enjoyment of such friendships with their heads up. The warm, personal friendship of a wise, mature man is a real asset—it may easily shed its power into all those years which lie ahead. Such friendships are there for the asking. The young man need not take his intimates just as they

happen to come, as we accept our companions in a railroad train for a few hours—he can choose them at will. There, within arm's length, is a splendid assortment from which he may select.

There is just one other choice of which I would speak—it is a choice to be made by all those who are getting started in life and it is the most important of all the choices. The great majority of young people have a certain religious background in the homes where they were reared and in the schools where they prepared for college. They bring with them as a part of their belongings certain ideas and attitudes, certain purposes and aspirations, which grew out of that religious background. It may well be the most valuable thing they have among their possessions. And it may easily be that some of that, perhaps a good deal of it, will be radically changed as they pursue their further studies in history, in philosophy, in science.

How much depends upon the way those changes are made! The sudden break between the faith of a boy and the religion of a man may be nothing less than a spiritual tragedy. "When I was a child, I thought as a child and understood as a child." We all did. It is the only way a child can think

at that stage of his development. But many of us grew up religiously and became men. Then we put away childish things.

It was not done all at once. It cannot be done in a hurry or overnight. It is a long, patient, orderly process of growth and readjustment. The lazy man looks at his earlier religious conceptions, saying to himself, "How childish all those notions were." He goes to the nearest window and throws them all out. Then he tries to rub along, as best he can, without God and with no competent philosophy of life. The man of sense holds on to all that is best in them and undertakes to think himself through. He finally emerges from that period of discrimination and readjustment with a more valid and a more rewarding faith. An honest religious faith, grounded in reason, vitalized by personal experience and made real by being related to everyday duty, is the best sort of preparation for the life that now is, and it furnishes the only adequate preparation for the life to come. The gaining of that sort of faith is an essential part of the work of those who are still looking ahead to the years of maturity.

When those Israelites entered a region as yet unknown, they were still led by the Ark of the

Covenant and the Tables of the Law which they had received at Sinai. When they crossed the river, they probably threw away their old shoes and ragged clothes which had been worn out in the wilderness, but they took with them the Ark of the Covenant which was to them the symbol of the Divine Presence—that was not worn out. They refused to cross the river into that untried land unless they could see the Ark of God, going through the water ahead of them to guide them, and those laws of life ready to take command of their further movements. They set all that out in the foreground at the very head of the procession. It was a new experience for them—they had not passed that way before—but the same old principles of honor, fidelity and aspiration still held the right of the line and pointed the way.

Here about us are mature men and women who have certain ideas and attitudes springing out of the religious background of their lives, which they carry with them wherever they go. They feel exactly as decent people feel in North Dakota or in the Hawaiian Islands or in South Africa, about laziness, meanness and dishonor. They feel as high-minded people anywhere feel about faith and hope and love, about the real worth of belief in God and in Christ, about the habit of prayer and

the hope of a future life. In like manner, they set those great principles of faith and conduct out in the forefront of their lives for their further guidance and inspiration. The years have taught them something about those values in life which are supreme and lasting—this significant action of theirs has meaning for all of us.

Henry Sloane Coffin tells the story of a certain college student who had flung off all the restraints of his home training and seemed to be headed straight for moral disaster. A close friend of his, who had eyes to see and a heart to understand, was reasoning with him about it and urging him to stop. "I feel that I ought to," he replied bluntly, "but I don't want to." He therefore went on for several months, still headed in the wrong direction.

Suddenly he took himself in hand, made an about-face and began to regain the ground he had lost. Some one asked him what had happened. "I just had to quit," he replied. "Something out of my Christian training rose up and grabbed me."

All unwittingly, he used the very term employed by the great apostle in describing his own experience. "I was apprehended"—that is to say, "laid hold upon"—"by Christ Jesus." In the language of psychology, "The influence of Christ upon his

early years conditioned him." He came around like a ship under the guidance of a skilled pilot and was now headed aright for a useful voyage.

If young people take thought and grow up (as everyone wants them to), they will see more of God, but they will see Him differently. If they face the light and walk in it, their eyesight and their insight will improve, and they will see Him more as He really is. They will come to think in quite another way about His relation to them, and to the society of which they are a part, and to the great wide universe about which we know so much more than did our great-grandfathers.

"But *you* and *you* and *you* will be the same *you*," as a wise man once said. "And He will be the same God and Father of us all, in whom many of us learned to put our trust long ago." As He was with Moses and with Joshua and with Jesus, He will be with us. "The Lord thy God, He it is that goeth with thee. He will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Therefore be strong and of a good courage"—and do your best.

#### 4. Having Something *vs.* Being Something

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There came a day when a man named Peter said, "Lord, we have left all and followed thee—what shall we have therefore?" We are sorry he said it. It strikes the wrong note. It is disappointing to have a religious leader say, "How much is there in it for us? What are we going to get out of it? We have done our duty, what shall we have therefore?"

There came another day, later in the season, when another man named John, a man who had grown wise and ripe in his Christian life, said, "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that we shall be like Him." How much better that is! He was not intent on having something, but upon being something.

How well do you know your grammar? You

can probably conjugate the verb "to have" in all its moods and tenses, perhaps in several different languages. You can readily form sentences connected with the process of having all manner of things. Could you make an equally good showing with the verb "to be"? It is much more important "to be" something than it is "to have" everything in sight. "We have done our duty, what shall we have therefore?" is the word of a moral beginner. "We are faced toward the light and we know that we shall be like Him," is the word of one who has grown spiritually competent.

Hamlet was right. "To be or not to be," something worthy and interesting, "that's the question" before the house. That other question, about having this, that and the other, is altogether secondary. "A man's life does not consist in the number of things that he has." Life is not made up of things. Life is made up of certain qualities of mind and heart. They tell us what a man really is. These qualities may go with an abundance of things, or with a scarcity of things as it happens, but in either case, life is not composed of things.

There are multitudes of people who are not in any sense wicked—they may be entirely respectable. But their lives are thin and trivial. They are dull and dead—dead at the top, dead at the heart,



dead to those interests which matter most. They have not even tried to adapt themselves to the sum total of their environment—they have simply ignored the most significant factors in that environment. The words addressed to those unhappy people in the Church at Sardis might easily be applied to them—"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead." However many things they may possess, life that is rich and fine and glad cannot be numbered among their assets.

How clearly the Sermon on the Mount brings out that truth. The first word in it is the word "happy." It is translated "blessed" in the Authorized Version but the original meaning of the term is "happy." The Master saw that all the people in the world wanted to be happy, but most of them were looking in the wrong place for their happiness—they were looking outside rather than inside. They too thought that happiness would come from having a lot of things. He therefore turned their eyes around and bade them look within.

He named eight of the principal sources of happiness and every one of them had to do with being something. "Happy are the poor in spirit"

—the people who feel that they are not good enough as they are now, they want to be better—"theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Happy are the gentle"—the gentlemen and the gentlewomen, rather than the fierce, the cruel, the grasping—"they shall inherit the earth." He saw that gentleness has a survival value which cruelty lacks, therefore it has the future in its hands. "Happy are the merciful," the kindly people, "for they shall receive kindness," from others and from him. "Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." In their own pure hearts, they have something with which they can see Him. These are the main sources of happiness. The surest way to be happy is to be like that rather than attempt it by seeking to have everything one sees in the stores.

There was once a king who had conquered all his enemies. He had amassed a huge fortune. He had built himself a palace where gold and silver, marble and onyx were as common as the dust of the ground. He had hundreds of strong men and beautiful women to minister to his comfort. Yet for all that he was not happy. He had lost his health, his peace of mind and his joy of soul.

He was so wretched that he did not want to

live. He sent for all his physicians and his wise men, but no one of them could bring him any relief. One day a strolling fortune-teller told him that if he would sleep for three nights in a shirt which belonged to a man who was perfectly happy, he would be cured of all his ills and would be perfectly happy himself.

The king at once sent out his couriers into all parts of his realm to find a man who was perfectly happy, that he might borrow one of the man's shirts. But their quest was in vain. Every man they found seemed to have a fly in his pot of ointment. There were spots on the sun everywhere. Not a man among them all would say that he was perfectly happy, and the king's hopes were dashed.

But one morning when the king was traveling through the country, he saw a peasant on his way to work in the fields, who seemed happy. He was singing lustily and his face was radiant. The king had the fellow summoned to his chariot and he asked the man if he was perfectly happy. The man said that he was. "I have a little home, a good wife and six fine children. I have my work and strength to do it. I am at peace with God and man—why shouldn't I be perfectly happy?"

Then the king made known his own sorry plight and asked him for the loan of one of his shirts.

"Alas," the man replied, "I am poor, and I have just been buying clothing for my wife and children, and I have not a shirt to my name. I wear but this." And pulling aside his rude blouse, there was his bare skin. The only perfectly happy man the king could find was a man who did not even own a shirt. Then the king knew that happiness must come from within—all the clothes on earth would not suffice.

In the very nature of the case, we cannot all have things enough to be rich. There is not wealth enough to go around. If all the wealth in the world were divided up equally, nobody would be rich. But we can all be something—there is enough of that to go around. Those finer qualities of life which Christ named can be developed without limit. And if we were all striving to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly before him, we would all find happiness together. His kingdom would come and his will be done on earth—and that would be heaven for everybody, here and now.

One of our best known philosophers in this country, John Dewey, of Columbia, has been telling us for the last ten years that the main defect in our modern American life is to be found in its

externalism. He means that we are so preoccupied with the material, the machinery, the tools of what we lightly call "civilization," that we are neglecting the inner quality of life itself.

He certainly has a show of facts on his side. Those tiresome people who are always sending out questionnaires for the rest of us to fill out, and then grinding up the answers into all sorts of charts, tables and curved lines, have been telling us recently that fifty years ago the ordinary person in this country wanted seventy-two different things and he regarded eighteen of them as absolute necessities. But today, they tell us, the ordinary person in this country wants four hundred ninety-six different things and he regards one hundred of them as absolute necessities. And as a result of this state of mind, millions of people are working their heads off and worrying their hearts out to obtain their full quota of those four hundred ninety-six different things, and as a consequence the inner life is being swamped.

When that young woman named Ruth, the original Ruth, the great-grandmother of David the king, gleaned after the reapers in the fields of Boaz, she had nothing but a hand sickle and her apron full of wheat. When Mrs. Ruth Hanna

McCormick (as she was then), a woman of remarkable ability and of unusual charm, wanted to be the United States Senator from the State of Illinois, she had an immense fortune and could afford to spend (as we are told she did) something like a quarter of a million dollars just on the chance of being elected.

With all of her money, she lost out—the people of that state chose another candidate to be their Senator. If we should place Ruth's hand sickle alongside of a McCormick Harvester and Reaper, if we should place Ruth's apron full of wheat alongside of the other Ruth's ample resources, we might think we had made wonderful progress in the last three thousand years. Suppose we should place Ruth herself alongside of some of these modern Ruths, how about that? We have improved on the sickle, but not always on Ruth herself. The first Ruth has been dead for three thousand years, yet those gracious words which fell from her lips when she spoke to Naomi, are quoted to this day. "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to cease from following after thee. Where thou goest, I will go. Where thou lodgest, I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God." Will the words of any of these

modern Ruths be quoted three thousand years from now?

You may recall Halford Luccock's clever illustration of that truth. When Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday, there was much excitement. The children were singing in the streets. His friends were calling out, "Hosanna! Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is the king that cometh in the name of the Lord." They were all alive to their finger tips over the prospect of a new and finer quality of life for their whole nation.

But there was one stupid disciple who missed the whole meaning of the occasion. He may have been a peasant from Galilee who had never been in the capital city of his country before. He was all taken up with the externals. "Master," he said, "look at these buildings! See these stones! See what an array of things men have gotten together here at Jerusalem!" Poor chap! We could match him, however, in any one of our own cities—the disposition to become absorbed in things to be had is not peculiar to any one locality or period.

Here is the pungent comment made by some clever writer (whose name we do not know) upon the life of a certain generation—"He gave them

their request but sent leanness into their souls." The Israelites had escaped from their meager surroundings in Egypt. They had reached a land which flowed with milk and honey. In the face of that abundance, they wanted everything. They reached out and got it, in what seemed to them a satisfying measure. Outwardly they were fat—their bodies were fat, their purses were fat, and their sense of complacency was exceedingly fat. But inwardly, they had shriveled up like dry peas in a dry pod.

I wonder what that ancient writer would say about this rich, rushing, restless land of ours. No people on earth in any period of history has ever had such a profusion of things. Look at our buildings! Look at our machinery! Look at the stream of commodities pouring out of our factories, as a result of our "mass production"! Watch Seattle grow!

Has the inner life kept pace with that rapidly increasing pile of things? Are we making an equally good showing in art and in music, in true culture and in religion, in literature (where the author of *Elmer Gantry* receives the Nobel prize) and in the graces of common speech? Listen to the sort of conversation one hears ordinarily on the trains, in our clubs, at our social functions! How



rapid and how vapid most of it is. It is flat and thin and dull. Parrots and chimpanzees could almost do it. The people are not saying anything, because they haven't anything to say. It argues an awful intellectual and spiritual poverty within. "He gave them their request but sent leanness into their souls."

If the Master were here again, I wonder if he might not say to us, what he said to that company of people on a certain hillside in Galilee. "Be not anxious saying, What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we put on?" How many millions of automobiles shall we have? How much furniture bought on the installment plan? How many changes of raiment? How much showy, noisy, thoughtless diversion? "After all these things do the nations of the world seek," or as Moffatt's translation has it in even more vivid phrase, "Pagans make all that their aim in life." Putting the chief emphasis on having a lot of things rather than upon being something is always the mark of a pagan. First things, first! Seek first the rule of the divine spirit within and then on the basis of that finer quality of inner life, all the things needed can be added.

What an exquisite picture of a little girl, Victor Hugo once drew in one of his stories! Her name

was Cosette and she was an orphan. She was only eight years old, yet she was already employed at an inn. She was very poor, so poor that she had no playthings—not even a doll. The two little daughters of the innkeeper had beautiful dolls, but Cosette was not allowed to play with them. She had only a little lead sword which she called her doll. She would take a few rags and dress it up and pretend that it was a doll.

A doll is a prime necessity for a child. The whole future of the little girl's womanhood is foreshadowed in the care she gives to her doll. She dresses it and undresses it, she cuddles it and sings it to sleep, until she becomes a big girl. Then she becomes a woman and her first baby takes the place of her last doll. All the materials for Cosette's play were poor and mean, but as the story brings it out, her active, eager imagination did the rest. Even in childhood, it is more important to be something than it is to have all manner of things.

What then, in a few words, are we meant to be? The low cynical view of human nature (which in certain quarters these days is supposed to be so "advanced") has nothing good to say about us. It feels that we are all small potatoes and few in

a hill. It sees nothing in human nature to admire, to strive after, or, if need be, to die for.

What a poor, weak, cheap philosophy of life it is! Blessed is the man who refuses to sit in the seat of the scornful. Some one has said of those cynical people. "Their patron saint is Diogenes, the man who lived in a tub and hated everybody. And the first line of their litany of worship is, 'Oh, what's the use.' " From all that, Good Lord deliver us! The basis of all good manners and of all good morals is to be found in a certain instinctive respect for human personality. We are not poor worms of the dust to be trodden underfoot and despised of men. We are made potentially in the likeness of Him who is above all.

What are we meant to be? We are here to show ourselves active, intelligent, responsible members of the social order. Sharing in the common load, rejoicing in all these contacts with our fellows, heirs with them of the same promise, facing with them upon the same high destiny, which some of us are still brave enough to believe lies on ahead.

We hold ourselves in high esteem because we are human; and we hold others in high esteem, because they too are human. "We are all members one of another and the head cannot say to the foot," the highest cannot say to the lowest, nor

the lowest to the highest, "I have no need of you." We are all needed. We are here to work out together in friendliness, in coöperation, in devotion to certain high ends, that finer social order which will mean a larger measure of well-being for all who share in it. To be like that, and to have ever so modest a part in doing that, is to live. Nothing less than that can be called life.

We are here to be sons and daughters of the Most High, made a little lower than the angels and crowned with the glory and honor of self-conscious, self-directing spiritual life. We are meant to have relationships which reach up and out into a world of unseen forces and values. When Tolstoi was fifty years old, he tells us, life suddenly palled on him. He went stale and for two whole years he felt dull, drab and despondent. He saw no reason why he should go on, and he wanted to die. He was actually afraid to sleep in a room where there was rope, for fear he should get up in the night and hang himself.

But one day he was walking alone through the woods, arguing with himself about the meaning of life and the existence of God. Suddenly light burst upon him. He noticed that every time he really thought about the living God, every time he said right out loud, "Our Father in heaven,"

there came a leap of fresh vitality within. For the moment, life had meaning again. "Why need I look further?" he said to himself. "He is here—surely the Lord is in this place. He is near—in Him we live and move and are. His will is our peace, and He is the final source of all those energies which make life real." And from that hour, he walked again in the light.

All that is exactly what the great apostle meant when he said, "For me to live is Christ." To live, is to have the same sort of trust in God that Christ had. It is to have the same spirit of good will toward one's fellow beings, that he had. It is to have the same clear sense of those values which are distinctively and permanently human, that he had. To be like that, is to live.

Then he added, "If any man is in Christ"—We say of a man, "He is *in* love." "He is *in* a rage." "He is *in* liquor." Immersed in it, dominated by it for the time! "If any man is *in* Christ," immersed in his spirit and dominated by him," he is a new creature. Old things are passed away and all things are become new, and all things are of God."

We are meant to be like that. If anyone will face the highest he sees and keep moving in that direction, he will presently find himself saying, "I

believe in God the Father Almighty, and this is eternal life, to know Him and to serve Him and to love Him." We all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image. It does not yet appear just what we shall be in that world unseen toward which we move steadily and surely, but when we face that light in which there is no darkness at all, we are confident that we shall be like Him.

## 5. How Much Do We Want?

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The measure and the quality of anyone's life is determined largely by the range and the vigor of his wants. A slender line of wants, a meager personality! A wider system of wants, an enriched personality! At how many different points are we making demands upon life? On what levels, high, low, medium? When we make those demands, what happens? Does anything in particular happen? It is a fruitful line of inquiry—it would lead to a fresh appraisal upon the value of many a life. How much do we really want?

Here are the opening sentences in a short story, which is familiar to almost everyone. "A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Give me the portion of goods which falleth to me.' And he divided unto them his living. Not many days after, the younger son

gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country. There he wasted his substance in riotous living. When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."

Suppose we stop right there! "He began to be in want." Thank heaven! It is the first hopeful statement made about that well-to-do young man. He had been born and brought up in a home of affluence. He had always lived on the sunny side of the street. His every need had been promptly met from a generous purse opened wide by the hands of affection. He had received everything that heart could wish.

But he wanted to be "on his own," as our modern phrase has it. He wanted to take the reins himself and drive where he pleased, and as fast as he pleased. "Give me my share of the estate," he said to his father, "right now." And the father (with an ill-timed generosity we might say) divided up his property and gave the young man all that would finally come to him. Not many days after, he gathered up all his belongings, took out a long letter of credit and took his journey into a far country.

There he wasted his substance going the pace. He spent his money right and left—principally



"left," for not much of it went in the right direction. He had money to throw at the birds—and he threw it at the birds, all kinds of birds. He came to be known along the boulevards of Paris, and in the cafés and music halls of Vienna and on the Riviera, if those were the places where fast young men went in those days when they took their journeys into far countries—the account does not say. He came to be known as "a good spender." What a silly phrase to be applied to anything that has a head on its shoulders! It is not quite the same as calling a fellow a downright idiot, but it looks strongly in that direction.

He was a good spender and he went through his fortune in a hurry. "And when he had spent all," and had not a sixpence left with which to bless himself, "there arose a mighty famine in that land." It was a time of general depression, like that through which the whole world has been passing in the last few years. "And he began to be in want." Then we read that for the first time in his life, "he came to himself." He began to see things as they were, in their true perspective, in their right proportions. He probably said to himself, "What a fool I am! Hired servants in my father's house have bread enough and to spare, and here I am with these swine, four-legged

and two-legged swine, perishing with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." He arose and went, and became once more the son of his father, a citizen of his own country, a child of God. The turning point, the new impulse which faced him toward the light and started him in the right direction, came in that hour when "he began to be in want."

A few years ago many of us were reading a very stimulating little book written by George Albert Coe, *The Motives of Men*. The very first chapter in it significantly discusses "The importance of a good supply of wants." Meager wants, meager manhood; enlarging wants, enlarging manhood. It is wanting something which starts a man in a certain direction and keeps him going. The man of force is always in want—he is forever demanding something more—something higher, something vaster—to meet the needs of his expanding nature. He is not disturbed by the fact that there are obstacles in the way. He rejoices in that inner urge which drives him ahead to overcome the obstacles. Life is not being able to sit down and order whatever one wants and have somebody bring it to him on a silver tray. That isn't life. Life is wanting something desper-

ately, and feeling anxious about it, and going out after it yourself and finally bringing it in by the use of your own powers. That is life—the other is just a plaster of Paris imitation.

How many people saw or read a certain little play which was brought out several years ago by the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City? It was written by John L. Balderston and was called *A Morality Play for the Leisure Class*. There was a certain wealthy man who had been living rather sumptuously. He was very orthodox, however, in his religious faith. He believed in a future life and in a state of rewards and punishments. He used to wonder occasionally just where he would finally bring up himself.

He was suddenly killed in an automobile accident. When he came to in the other world, he did not see anybody around, and so he called out, "Is there anyone here?" Instantly a white-robed attendant glided in and asked what he could do for the man's comfort and pleasure.

"What can I have?" the man asked. "Any thing you like," the attendant replied. "How about a golden crown?" "You can have one if you like," was the reply. Instantly a starry crown was placed upon his brow. The man was very much pleased.

It had turned out better than he had feared—evidently he had come to the right place after all.

“What else can I have?” “Anything you like”—that was the reply which came back to every request he made. Anything you like! He at once ordered a lot of good things to eat and to drink and to wear. They were all supplied to him immediately. He expressed a wish for a handsome apartment to live in, with elegant hangings and furniture and pictures, and all these were forthcoming without delay. It was a wonderful place where he found himself.

If he wanted to read, there was a library with all the books of which he had ever heard, and many of which he knew nothing at all. If he wanted to hear music, he could “listen in” to the best there was. If he expressed a desire for ladies’ society, he was told that Helen of Troy and Cleopatra, Madame du Barry, Lady Hamilton and other charming women of history were there—he could meet them all. It was a marvelous place. So he went on ordering all the good things he could think of and enjoying himself.

But after a few weeks, he began to get a little tired of it. He expressed a wish for some work to do. He was promptly told that in that unseen world nobody worked—everyone could have

whatever he desired merely by asking for it. The man therefore went on for a month or two longer, enjoying the pleasures of the place.

But finally they began to pall on him, and one day he burst out impatiently, "Oh, I am sick of this everlasting bliss—I would rather be in hell."

"Why," said the attendant with a good deal of surprise, "where do you think you are?"

One might almost say that the story of progress is the story of an ascending and widening series of wants. The rude savage on some tropical island in the South Seas is not in want. He is perfectly satisfied with what he has and is. The climate is warm and he can go about naked—he does not want clothes. He can live on breadfruit and bananas (which grow abundantly everywhere) and fish, which are so lazy in the warm waters of the Bay, that he can almost take them with his bare hands. He can sleep under a tree or in a rude shack—he does not want a house. That about covers the range of his interests—he is not in want.

But presently there appears upon the scene a teacher, a missionary perhaps, a presence which disturbs the islander with the sense of higher things. He becomes uneasy. Presently he wants a shirt—his awakened sense of decency now de-

mands that it be clothed. Then ere long he wants better food. The sight of the more varied and appetizing diet enjoyed by the missionary makes him feel that raw fish and bananas are not enough. Presently he wants the comfort and privacy of a home for himself and his family—he has outgrown the rude shack. He sees the missionary reading, a whole new world opened up to him through pages of print, and very soon the islander wants a book and to be taught how to read. Then he wants the Church and God—the rude fetich and the ugly idols of wood and stone he once revered have all become repulsive to him. His heart cries out for the Living God. And when every part of that man's nature has learned to be in want and is in process of finding the appropriate satisfaction for that need, he is on his way to self-realization. He is on his way to become a Christian through that ascending and widening system of wants.

The same process is enacted in the life of every growing child. All the baby wants is milk and a soft, warm place to sleep. But as the baby grows older, he wants toys, playthings—simple, indestructible ones at first and then more elaborate toys to furnish him amusement on a higher level. Then ere long he wants the society of his peers,

other children to play with. Then as he grows up, he wants pictures, books, the school, the church, the state, and at last a family of his own. His whole progress, from soft pulpy infancy up to a firm, mature, resolute manhood, is marked by that same ascending and widening series of wants.

Religion has always recognized the fact that to be in want is a sign of health. It foretells growth. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." The people who feel that they are not good enough as they are—they want to be better! Their mouths water at the very sight of real character, and they crave more of it for themselves. Blessed are all such people—"they shall be filled." The people who feel that they are good enough already are at a standstill. They make no progress—they are on a "one-way street," and the traffic is blocked by their own conceit.

Two men once went into the Temple to pray. One of them was a Pharisee. He was not in want—he was perfectly satisfied with himself. He felt so full of righteousness already that he would have refused another mouthful. He just dropped in to tell the Lord how well-fed he was. "Thank God," he said, "I am not as other men are, unjust,

extortioners, adulterers or even as that publican yonder on the back seat. I fast twice a week. I give a tenth to the cause of religion." When the service was over, he went away unblessed.

The other man was a publican, and he felt so hungry, so empty, so unworthy, that he could not stand up straight. He could not even lift up his eyes unto heaven. He smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And the man in want "went down to his house justified rather than the other."

How clearly Canon Raven puts this truth in his book, *Jesus and the Gospel of Love*<sup>1</sup>: "It is sensitiveness that denotes life; and sensitiveness reaches its fullest manifestation from the possession of an aim wide enough to involve swift, spontaneous response to the whole range of environment, and coherent enough to make that response consistent and purposive. If the aim is narrow, large sections of the environment are untouched by it; if the aim is incoherent, it will be pursued at haphazard and without concentration."

"How is your appetite?" the doctor always asks when he comes. If the patient hasn't any appetite, he is sick. Healthy people begin to be in want of wholesome food about three times every

<sup>1</sup>Page III.



day. Let me as a minister of religion ask that same question of everyone who reads these lines. "How is your appetite? Do you hunger after righteousness? Is there something within you that is athirst for the sense of fellowship with the living God? When you are at your best, your mind the clearest, your heart the purest, do you crave certain forms of satisfaction which lie deeper than these surface pleasures as they come and go?"

All healthy people feel that way. If anyone does not, he is sick. Religion is not an elective—it is always a required course. It is obligatory, just as food and fresh air, books and friends, are obligatory. We cannot live without them—we cannot live well-rounded lives without them. And the hard fact stands, after nineteen hundred years of experiment, that we cannot live well-rounded lives without Him, without those forces and values for which he stood. The Master did not come to impose something arbitrary upon us. He came that we might have life, and that we might have it to the full. That is the reason why he stood there on the shores of Galilee calling out, "Come to me! Follow me! Abide in me," and your lives will be full and fine and glad.

The great apostle went once to the city of Athens. It was a center of learning and culture,

like Oxford and Cambridge in England, like Cambridge and New Haven and Princeton in this country. They worshiped a great many different deities in Athens. They worshiped three thousand different gods and goddesses. They built altars and erected statues to them all. Gods abounded. There were so many of them that Will Rogers, who was living in Athens at that time (he bore another name then, of course—Alcibiades perhaps or something like that) once said that they worshiped so many deities that on the streets of Athens it was easier to find a god than a man.

The apostle's spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. But as he passed along beholding the objects of their worship, he found one altar with this strange inscription, "To the Unknown God." No name on it! All the other altars had names on them, Zeus, Athene, Mercury, Apollo, and the like. Here was an altar without a name—it was like the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."

The apostle felt instantly that this was encouraging. Here was a hand stretched out, feeling after Something, if haply it might find it, but still empty. Here was a pair of eyes peering anxiously into the dark but not finding the object of their scrutiny. Here was touching evidence that in

Athens there were certain uneasy, hungry souls which had not found in any of those sculptured deities the satisfaction they craved. Hearts hungry for a God whose name they did not know! The apostle took that inscription for his text and there in the midst of Mars' Hill, he brought his supply of help to those unfed mouths. "Whom therefore ye ignorantly"—the Greek word he used means literally agnostically—"worship, him declare I unto you." He rejoiced that some of those people felt themselves to be "in want," and he brought them what they lacked.

Here in the last book of the Bible, the prayers of the people are asked for a man who is not ordinarily regarded as an object of sympathy. He stands there saying, "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." Poor chap! He had not gotten his eyes open wide enough to recognize the fact that he was "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." The last five words in his statement tell the whole story—"I have need of nothing." They read like the epitaph on the grave of a lost soul. When anyone says, either in so many words or by his bearing and attitude, "I have need of nothing," you know at once that he is dead. He may not

have been buried yet, but he is dead. The time and place of the funeral will be announced later. Sound health means always the sense of want, where the best that is in a man is eagerly reaching out for the best there is.

James Russell Lowell used to say to the young men at Harvard, "The true office of education is to distribute the bread of life, and to breed an appetite for it." Would that it might "breed an appetite" for the best there is, in every student and in every mature person all over the land.

If anyone finds himself doing his work, whatever it may be, in a way that satisfies him—not nearly so well as he might do it but well enough to "get by" as we say in our easy-going phrase; if anyone finds himself satisfied with his personality just as it is, not nearly so forceful or interesting as he might make it by some extra effort, but sufficient to win a few friends and admirers; if anyone finds himself with no sense of penitence over moral failures (which are many, God knows, in all of us), let him take himself in hand! Let all such people face the fact that their performance is away below their capacity. Let them put themselves in the presence of more searching ambitions, more exacting requirements, more rigorous forms of discipline. Let them stay there, until they feel

themselves in want, until their natures are crying out for a certain added spiritual adequacy to the demands which are being made upon them. The demands are coming all the while, from within by the voice of conscience, from without by the needs of those about us, from above, by the Judge of all the earth. No one likes to be weighed in the balance and found wanting and cast aside as a discard. The only lives which weigh out sixteen ounces to the pound are those lives whose sense of need prompts them steadily to reach out for something higher.

In view of that sense of lack, which belongs to healthy life, how fine it is that we may always, if we will, face squarely upon an infinite supply of strength, of wisdom, of goodness. It is there within reach. The Giver of every good and perfect gift does not leave us permanently unsatisfied—He comes to us in all His abundance. It is a well-recognized principle in human experience that wherever we find a normal, widespread, persistent desire, we find somewhere standing over against it the corresponding satisfaction. The great natural order, seen and unseen, which enfolds us, keeps faith with all the deeper needs of the race.

The deepest and strongest desire we know any-

thing about is the desire for fullness of life. For our own self-realization and for that finer quality of service we would like to render, we crave a sense of contact and fellowship between these finite spirits of ours and the Infinite Spirit of Him whom we have learned to call "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Long ages and wide areas of human experience tell us that the corresponding satisfaction for that desire is here within reach. In some high hour of aspiration, does not every soul cry out, "Shew me the path of life! Hold me by thy right hand! Guide me with thy counsel! In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Strong Son of God, Immortal love,  
Whom we that have not seen thy face,  
By faith and faith alone embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove.

. . . . .

Oh yet we trust that somehow good,  
Shall be the final goal of ill,  
That nothing walks with aimless feet,  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God has made the pile complete.

## 6. How Can We Know Life?

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When one young fellow says to another, "Let's go down to New York for the week-end and see life," he may have in mind something which stands at a long remove from "life." What he actually sees in "making the rounds" may be an ugly, depressing form of decay, disease and death.

Life is the very opposite of all that. Life is fair and fine and glad. Life is like God. "No man hath seen God at any time," and no man has ever seen life at any time. He sees various manifestations of it but life itself lies hidden within these externals. Life is thought, feeling, purpose; it is faith and hope and love uttering itself in deeds which match. When that ancient singer looked up and said, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life," his mind was filled with images which shone like stars.

"There is no human problem to whose solution religion may not make an important contribution by tapping sources of wisdom and courage otherwise inaccessible; but there is one mighty problem which lies in religion's peculiar domain. How can we make the most of ourselves and of our opportunities? How can we face life's crises and life's drab routine . . . and carry on, not with half the courage, wisdom, humor, generosity and hopefulness of which we are capable but with all of it? Or to sum it all up, How can we live like human beings?"<sup>1</sup>

A few years ago many young people (and older people as well) were reading Streeter's little book on *Reality*. It was packed with straight, sound talk about the things which matter most. The book itself was as "real" as Bessemer steel, yet so vital that if you cut into it anywhere it would bleed. In one of the early chapters, the author said that anyone's knowledge of life depends upon these three things: the depth and range of his personal experience; the measure of his sympathy enabling him to share the experiences of others; and the extent to which he has reflected upon all that material. Experience, Sympathy, Reflection—by

<sup>1</sup> Horton, *A Psychological Approach to Theology*, p. 70.



these three we know life. In this chapter let me hold them up where we can look at them together.

The depth and range of personal experience. "The mystery of life is not a problem to be solved, it is a reality to be experienced." In his onward march, at how many different points does each man's life impinge upon reality? In how many different ways does he feel after it, if haply he may find it? On what levels, high, low, medium? To what forms of stimulus does he readily respond? Is he sensitive all the way up, and all the way in, and all the way around, or is he sensitive only along some limited arc of the great circle of human interest? How far afield do his inclinations habitually go? These are the tests.

For example, when some man says, haughtily and brusquely, "What do I care about religion, about God and Christ, about prayer and the Bible, about the fellowship of the church or the hope of future life?", it is apparent at once that to an alarming extent, he is already dead. The arrangements for the funeral may not yet have been made but "the remains" are there in plain sight. He is dead at the top, dead in those areas which mean most. Life means being responsive to all that is worthy. Man does not live by bread

alone, even when the bread is abundant and of the best quality. There is not enough on the surface of the ground anywhere to meet the needs of a human soul. Man lives by all the great interests which find place within healthy human desire, food, clothing and shelter, love, knowledge and aspiration, art and music, literature and science, politics and religion! By all these, man lives.

Here is a picture of Henry Drummond, drawn by his friend, Sir George Adam Smith! It has stuck in my mind ever since I read it for the first time thirty odd years ago. "You saw Drummond, a tall, lithe, graceful, well-dressed gentleman. He was keen for any one of a hundred different interests. He fished, he shot, he skated, as few men could. He played billiards and cricket and golf with rare skill. Every time you met him, he had a new story, a new joke, a new puzzle. You met him on the train, and he would show you a fresh story from his favorite Bret Harte, or some serious article from a recent Review. It might be a rainy afternoon in the country, and he would describe a new game—in five minutes everybody would be playing it. He might be at a children's party, and they would all be clamoring for his sleight of hand tricks. If you met him alone, he would know what interested you most, and would

listen by the hour. If the talk ran on deeper things, he was as much at home there as he was everywhere else. He was the embodiment of thoughtful, instant kindness—and men took knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus Christ. What a life it was!”

On the other hand, one meets people who are not wicked, but they are as empty and uninteresting as gourds. If one should shake them, he would not even hear the rattle of dry seeds inside. There are none there. These people do not read, they do not think, they do not feel, they do not live—they just exist behind closed doors. They touch the surface of life here and there in a superficial way, but they never get beneath the rind. Subject them to the first test named by Streeter, and they make a sorry showing. They have neither depth nor range of personal experience.

Some man of science once defined life as “the ability to react to external stimulus.” If one pokes a rock pile, or a concrete sidewalk, or the dead body of a dog, nothing happens. There is no response; there is no life there. If one pokes a live dog lying there asleep, there is something doing at once. The dog is alive and he makes reply. Here is the whole world of reality with all kinds of forces in it (seen and unseen), about us, within

us, above us, poking at us all the time. What happens? All those people who allow the world of spiritual reality to pass them by, just as if it were not there, are simply failing to live. The best of them is somehow being left out. Mark Twain once said, half-humorously and half-seriously, "It must be awful to waken up at night alone in bed and realize that there is nobody there."

Would anyone know more of life? He will not gain that knowledge by rushing hither and yon, a week-end here, and a week-end there, and another one farther on. Let him begin where his need seems to be most acute. Let him enter into the depths of his own heart and shut the door. Let him say to the One who sees in secret, "Draw nigh to me, as I draw nigh to Thee, in thought, in desire, in purpose. Help me to know Thee, whom to know aright is life eternal."

It can be done. He is not far from any one of us, for in Him we live and move and are, as fish live in the sea and birds in the air. His will is our peace and his Presence is our native element. Depth and range of experience! If one would know life, let him make it his habit to rise ever and anon to those higher levels and penetrate those farther recesses. He will then be taking long steps in the way that goeth upward into fullness

of being. If anyone doubts it, let him try it. The final test of all these claims which are made for religion is to be found in experience. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord, and see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out such a portion of the more abundant life, that you will not have room enough to receive it."

It was a disillusioned poet, who, having lost his Christian faith, said with a note of sadness, "How certain conclusions do take the shine out of existence." It was Harry Emerson Fosdick who said, "Irreligion takes the bounce out of life, robs it of radiance, resilience, zest. It need not make life wicked; it may not even make life tragic; it makes life trivial."<sup>2</sup> If anyone would love life and see good days, let him look up and say, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; At thy right hand, there are pleasures for evermore." Why should anyone try to palm off on himself anything less than his full quota of that "depth and range of personal experience"?

One's knowledge of life is measured also by that sympathy which enables him to share in the experiences of others. "Unus homo, nullus homo," the Romans said in their familiar proverb. A man

<sup>2</sup> *As I See Religion*, p. 185.

standing alone is no man at all. We find ourselves and we fulfill the main purposes of human existence by entering into joyous, useful fellowship and coöperation with others. How many friends have you? How well do you know them? How wide a range do they cover? The man who makes a point of knowing only persons of his own set, his own particular political, social, economic or religious group, cuts himself off from rich sources of supply. He is in danger of becoming at last a small, dry speck, where there should be fullness of life.

"I am not alone," Jesus said, "the Father is with me. The words that I speak, I speak not of myself—the Father that dwelleth within me doeth the work." Horizontally, as well as vertically, he was "not alone." How he shared the life of his fellow beings! He bore their burdens and carried their sorrows. He was tempted in all points as they were. From the manger of the stable to that lonely cross upon the hill, he was the Perfect, the Typal, the Representative Man, the Son of Man, sharing our experience to the full. By all that, he gained his power to help those who are tempted, burdened, broken oftentimes upon the wheel of life.

Pity means only that we feel sorry for others. Sympathy goes away beyond that—it means that

we "feel with them." How much does anyone know about life? How far does he ordinarily make their experiences his own? Here are men and women out of work, wearily tramping our streets asking only for the chance to use their strength to earn their bread—and asking in vain! Here are men tempted by forms of evil, which might not appeal to you and me—they appeal to them. They clench their hands and grit their teeth—and then sometimes win, and sometimes lose. Here are those who are overwhelmed by disappointment—calamities unforeseen, for which they were in no way responsible, have stripped away their former sense of security and left them struggling! Here are those who feel as if all the faith and hope and love they ever had was slipping away, leaving their lives cold and bare! How far does one enter sympathetically into all that? To feel deeply, and then to reach out a hand of help, is to live.

Here was John Coleridge Patteson, of Melanesia! He belonged to an English family of wealth, culture, social position. He was a university man, an athlete who played cricket at Eton and at Oxford with distinction. He had a personality which combined strength with charm. He might easily have risen to almost any position in

the commercial or the political life of his country. But he had a firm set toward being a missionary.

He went out to make the needs of those Melanesians, savages, headhunters, unspeakable in their morals, his own. He was an expert linguist and he learned to speak all of the twenty-three rude languages used in those islands. He reduced them to writing and translated the best of the Bible into them all, that those primitive people might hear the word of the Lord in the tongues in which they were born. Traders were there, kidnapping the natives and selling them into slavery. Patteson laid the foundation for the total abolition of the slave trade. He laid down his life for those people, a scholar, a Christian, a gentleman—and they responded with gratitude in terms of renewed life. When the end came, he felt that he knew life. Well he might! Evil has been defined as “vitality defeated” and good as “vitality triumphant.” He won out, and went out with palms of victory in both hands.

This is where the “hard-boiled” (as they like to call themselves) lose out. They are so afraid of being regarded as sentimental, that they are in danger of not caring much about anything. There is nothing particularly jolly about being so dead that one would not feel it if a steel wire nail were



driven into him clear to the head. There is nothing attractive or interesting about being so calloused in one's inner life, that he can pass by all the griefs, doubts and struggles of others, unmoved. The priest and the Levite in the parable saw human need, "and passed by on the other side" without turning a hair—and the whole world has held them up to scorn.

Who would covet the state of mind indicated by George Jean Nathan in his published confession of faith. "To me," he writes, "pleasure and my own personal happiness—only infrequently collaborating with others—are all I deem worth a hoot. . . . The happiness and welfare of mankind are not my profession. I am perfectly willing to leave them to the care of the professional missionaries—I have all that I can do to look out for my own welfare and happiness. . . . I am against all reform and all reformers. The world, as I see it, is sufficiently gay, beautiful and happy as it stands. It is defective only to those who are themselves defective, who lack the sagacity, imagination, humor and wit to squeeze out its rich and jocose juices and go swimming in them."<sup>3</sup>

What a picture of himself he draws—apparently with entire frankness and sincerity! What

<sup>3</sup> *Living Philosophies*, pp. 222, 223, 227.

further exhibit would anyone need of "a living death." When one thinks of William Booth and Booker T. Washington, Jane Addams and Wilfred Grenfell, Father Damien and Albert Schweitzer, what a bitter mockery of all that is fair in life this flippant, frivolous, heartless comment upon the meaning of human existence, becomes! What a sorry showing is made by all those cynical people whose attitude toward life is something like a cross between a yawn and a sneeze.

How utterly unlike Him is that whole hard-boiled, blasé mood, even though it may be oftentimes nothing more than a showy gesture or an artificial pose. "I have compassion on the multitude—I will not send them away hungry lest they faint by the way." He had compassion on the weary—"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." The God we worship is not a fixed star nor an infinite lump of cold inertia—"His father saw him, when he was yet a great way off, and ran." It was said of Him who is above all, "He telleth the number of the stars and he healeth the broken in heart." He keeps all the planets in the sky moving along their orbits on schedule time, and he draws near to comfort a brokenhearted woman who has lost her child. When we look at them soberly, how cheap

and thin seem the words of that cynic I have just quoted. All life, human or divine, is to be judged at last by its ability to enter sympathetically into the experiences of others.

How much one knows about life is measured also by the extent to which he has reflected upon the material furnished by experience. The meaning of a fact is always more interesting and significant than the bare fact itself with no interpretation draped about it. "The same night that he was betrayed, Jesus took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to his disciples." All that is mere statement of outward fact.

Then he bade them reflect upon the deeper meaning of his action. "This," he said, pointing to the loaf, "is my body. Broken for you! Take, eat." Make it your own. Let it become a part of your inner life. It is the symbol and channel of new life. "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." This is bold, vivid oriental imagery, but when those disciples reflected upon the deeper meaning of it, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper came to have a certain spiritual dynamic which cannot be put into words.

Here is an illustration which I once read—I

cannot remember where— You want to know something about the city of Venice. You take your guide book, your Baedeker, with its carefully drawn maps. Here is the Grand Canal, and all the lesser canals, and the various little streets. Here is St. Marks Cathedral and the Church of Santa Maria della Salute. Here is the Doges' Palace, and all the other palaces, and the various galleries. It is entirely accurate as a statement of necessary facts, and you go to see those places. But if you want that attitude of mind which will enable you to get the most out of your visit to Venice, you read Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*—he wrote as an artist. You look at the paintings of Venice by Turner, until the deeper meaning of the place which that city had in the life of the world, has passed into your consciousness; you reflect upon that which lies beneath the surface—then you know your Venice.

In like manner, there are other realities more important than Venice—life itself, for example—which have to be approached according to their own particular technique. "Eye hath not seen"—we do not lay hold of them by physical sensation. "Nor ear heard"—they do not come to us by hearsay. "Neither hath it entered into the mind of man to conceive the things which God has pre-

pared for those who love him"—we do not apprehend them by formal logic. "God reveals them to us by his Spirit." "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned."

The very essence of religion is to be found in the soul's awareness of Him, as we reflect upon all the truth which has come to us about Him through His word and His world, through His people and through His Son. "It is the full, deep rapture of the soul," as Frederick W. Robertson once said, "into which the spirit of God is pouring itself in a mighty tide." "Whatsoever things are just, true, clean, whatsoever things are honorable, reputable, likable, think on these things . . . and the God of peace shall be with you."

"Now can you prove all that?" some one asks. No, not in the sense in which the word "proof" is commonly used. Man does not live solely nor mainly by proofs—he lives by insights. "There are some things," Ernest F. Tittle says,<sup>4</sup> "which cannot be proved. Some things? The greatest of all things."

Some lover of beauty stands in the Sistine Chapel at Rome looking up at the frescoes and exclaiming, "Here is one of the supreme achievements of human art." Then some tired, bored

<sup>4</sup> *The Foolishness of Preaching*, p. 45.

American tourist says, "Now prove that." Some lover of music sits listening to an orchestra playing Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," saying to himself, "What marvelous sounds!" Then some devotee of jazz and saxophones says to him, "Can you prove that?" Some lover of good literature sees visions and dreams dreams as he reads Tennyson's *In Memoriam* or Browning's *Saul*, feeling that he is engaged with English in some of its noblest forms. Then some man who never reads anything but tabloid newspapers and *Snappy Stories* challenges him to "prove it." What can one say? There is nothing to be said. Doctor Tittle makes it clear that if those people cannot see nor hear nor feel it for themselves, they do not know life in its finer phases.

"What man knows the things of a man save the spirit of a man?" It takes a deep, rich, warm humanity to know what human life really is. Even so, "no man knows the things of God save by the spirit of God which dwelleth in him." Has one never known what it is to have the affections purified until naturally and inevitably he loves what God loves? Has one never known the feeling of a weak will made strong to do His will? Has one never known the joy of having his aspirations

lifted until they take their rightful place against the sky? All that is life—life at its best, life to the full, life which is life indeed. Let each man think upon it, until he finds himself transformed by the renewing of his mind.

There was a Young People's Conference held in Kansas a few years ago which phrased and adopted what they were pleased to call, "Christianity's Irreducible Minimum." It was a pretentious caption, but the young people put some sound content into it. They stoutly insisted that these five elements must find place in that "Minimum": "A personal religious experience like that of Jesus. Family life based upon Jesus' idea of marriage. A Church losing its life in unselfish service. Organized industry transformed by the spirit of friendly coöperation into a vital section of the kingdom of God. A racial attitude which does not stop short of the practice of universal good will."

Here are five points of Christian life—how far they go beyond the famous "Five Points" of that standardized Calvinism which once held the center of the stage in theological thought. Can life mean anything less than that and be called "Christian"?

If we would know life, "root and all, and all in all," could we do better than to give heed to

that ancient bit of counsel offered us by the unknown author of the book of Deuteronomy, having in mind the august implications of his brief word:

“I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . . Therefore choose life.”



## 7. The Weakness of Half-Truths

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How thoroughly human is that story of Balaam! Those old chaps in that far-away land and time wore sandals rather than shoes, flowing robes instead of trousers. They rode on camels and donkeys, knowing nothing about automobiles and steam cars. Yet in their moral processes, they were "even as you and I."

This man Balaam was regarded as a prophet of the Lord. His word was with power—it was believed that his blessings and his curses were mighty for good or for ill. He had reputation—kings came to consult him and to ask his help. When the King of Moab saw those Israelites swarming across the border after their victory over the Amorites, he wanted Balaam to curse them, so that he might be able to drive them out. He sent messengers to the prophet "with the re-

wards of divination in their hands"—they had the price. But the prophet refused to go. For some reason, he felt that those Israelites were not a people to be cursed. "Go back," he said, "the Lord refuseth me leave to go with you."

Then the king sent another delegation of more honorable princes with the promise of still greater reward. When the second delegation arrived, the prophet, instead of sticking to his first right decision, began to parley with his sense of right and wrong. He still talked loud and well. "If the king would give me his houseful of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord."

"But," he added, "tarry ye here this night that I may hear what more the Lord may say." Let me think it over again. Let me sleep on it. He wanted to stay a little longer in the presence of that temptation and feel the further warmth of an evil desire. When morning came, the devil had him. He was ready to go. "He rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass." "Booted and spurred and ready to ride" along the road of wrong doing. He wanted that rich reward. He told the messengers that the Lord had changed His mind, and had given him leave to go with them, but that he must speak only the word which the Lord commanded.

The moment he started, he encountered difficulties. The ass, which had carried him faithfully for years, did not want to go to the land of Moab. She turned aside into a field. When the prophet had gotten her back into the road again, she jammed his foot against a stone wall, as if to lame him and thus prevent the journey. When he finally made his third start, the beast laid down under him and rolled him off in the dirt. Then the prophet was angry, and he beat the poor beast over the head with his staff.

"But the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she spoke." We are not told what language she used—it may have been the language of signs. When a dog loves his master, he can speak volumes with his eyes, or even with his tail. The dumb beast protested in some way against the cruel treatment she had received.

"Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with a drawn sword." Had he gone ten feet further, he would have been killed. His conscience had been troubling him and he at once interpreted all these hindrances as obstacles divinely raised up to restrain him from an evil course. He said to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned. I knew not that it was thou that stoodest in the way. I

will go back." Had he acted upon that sober second thought, he might still have saved his honor. But he coveted that reward, and after further consideration, he decided to go on. Alas, poor Balaam! He had sold out and all his fine words were as sounding brass.

When he reached the land of Moab, he found that the king had built seven altars and had provided seven bullocks and seven rams for the sacrifice. No pains were to be spared to make that curse upon those Israelites effective. The prophet stood up to earn his pay. He made his mysterious passes. But when he opened his mouth to utter the magic formula, somehow the words of cursing would not come. "How can I curse what God has not cursed? How shall I defy those whom God has not defied? How goodly are thy tabernacles, O Israel! This people shall dwell alone and not be numbered with the nations." He saw already something of the solitary moral grandeur of the Hebrew nation in the days of its strength. "This people shall dwell alone. A Star shall arise out of Jacob and a Scepter from Israel."

Then the king was angry, and he burst out, "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them." Come to another place. Build the altar over here, where "thou shalt see but the

fringe of them and not see them all, and curse me them from thence." He felt that if the prophet would look only at the fag end of the Israelites, the curse might still be made to work. It was the familiar effort (as Phillips Brooks once said) "to secure a curse upon a half-truth, where the vision of the whole truth would mean a blessing."

In this chapter let me apply that principle in several directions, indicating the weakness of all half-truths. We find it in dealing with other people. The spirit of ill will is always saying, "Come over here where you will see but the fag end of that man's life and curse him from thence." One can scarcely think of anybody who might not stand condemned, if he were judged solely by some broken fragment of his life. In some hour of weakness, in some moment of resentment, he may have said or done that which was in no sense characteristic of him. By that half-inch of conduct, we condemn him in our own hearts, and we may condemn him to others by reporting that single slip.

Some woman, through the very kindness of her heart and her desire to please, may do something which has in it no thought of evil. Yet some nasty-minded gossip takes that single act apart

from its setting and gives it an ugly look. How unjust it all is! We cannot judge anyone by chance words, stray actions, snap shots taken without reference to the slowly unfolding panorama of the person's whole life. What are his prevailing purposes, his dominant motives, the main trend and drift of his conduct? Not fag ends, or bits of fringe, or half-truths, but the general direction he is taking! By these, we judge the character of the man.

How does God judge us? "According to the deeds done in the body"—the whole of them taken together. Not by some insignificant fragment, some moral slip nor by some hasty bit of death-bed repentance! We have wondered oftentimes about some of the judgments expressed in the Bible. Moses is called the meekest man who ever lived, yet he lost his temper on one occasion and smashed the two tables of stone which held the Ten Commandments. That, however, was not his prevailing mood—he was gentle, patient, forgiving toward those wayward Israelites, beyond any other man of his time.

David is called "a man after God's own heart," yet he was guilty of a great wrong. But that moral lapse did not represent the real man. How genuinely he repented of it, humbly accepting the stern

rebuke of Nathan the prophet. "Have mercy upon me, O God. Against thee, have I sinned. Blot out my transgression. Create in me a clean heart. Renew a right spirit within me." Such a man, even though he has fallen down but has repented and gotten up again faced toward the light, is a man after God's own heart. Judge every man not by what he is in some disappointing moment, but by what he wants to be and by the grace of God intends to be. Then one's curses will oftentimes be changed into blessings.

The same principle may be applied to one's use of the Bible. Every now and then some scornful, flippant, undeveloped person says in glib, jaunty fashion, "I do not believe in the Bible—it is so ridiculous." It is not necessary to look shocked—most of us also have had the measles, and we were not a very pretty sight at the time. One simply asks, "What is it in the Bible that you do not believe?"

Then comes the well-worn list. "I do not believe that the world was made in six days. I do not believe that a woman was made from a rib taken from the side of a man. I do not believe that Joshua made the sun stand still for a whole day.

I do not believe that the Lord told the Israelites to slaughter their enemies and dash the brains of little babies out against the stones." Fringes and fragments which have nothing whatever to do with the worth of the Bible! One is moved to say, "You do not believe that? Neither do I, nor does any intelligent student of the Bible."

We cannot deal with the Bible in that narrow-minded, peddling fashion. To do that is always a sign of ignorance. Look at it in the large. Come where you will see the great spiritual process which lies embedded in this literature. Look at the steady advance made by those people chosen of old for their religious capacity! Look at the progressive revelation which God has made of Himself through their deeper spiritual experiences, as they stand recorded here. Look at the conclusions to which these writings finally bring us, in sound moral judgment, in wise principles of action, in a satisfying outlook upon the whole of life. Not some petty bit of fringe but the whole bolt of cloth woven by many hands! Look upon that broader aspect of the Bible, and see if you can curse what God has not cursed, and defy what the best moral judgment of the race has not defied.

"The modern historical method" of Bible study,



stripped of its technical phrases, is just the frank recognition of the fact that "at sundry times and in divers manners, God spake to his people by the prophets." He spake with varying degrees of clearness as they were able to hear and to understand. In these writings (covering a period of more than a thousand years) we have the record of a long historic process. The truth came, first the blade, then by and by the ear, then away along in the autumn, the full ripe corn. When the race was a child, it spoke as a child and understood as a child. It had to wait for the coming of the mind of Christ to put away many of its childish things. View the Bible in the large, and you will be moved to say, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

I presided once at a debate between G. K. Chesterton and Clarence Darrow on the question, "Will the world return to religion?" It lasted for two hours. It was a great disappointment to the five thousand people gathered there. Neither man dealt with religion in any straightforward fashion. Mr. Chesterton made a number of brilliant, interesting remarks, but he never came to grips with his subject. Mr. Darrow fiddled away his time

talking about Jonah and the whale, Joshua calling upon the sun to stand still, the story of the three Hebrew boys cast into the fiery furnace, and other matters equally trivial.

What has all that to do with religion? What has that to do with Christian life, as honest-minded people are trying to live it? After listening to him patiently for an hour (for I was in the chair and was the timekeeper), I wondered if Mr. Darrow has any conception of what religion really is.

Religion is a conscious, personal bearing toward a Being conceived of as divine, and the expression of that bearing in worship and in conduct ordered with reference to what is believed to be the will of that Divine Being. The Bible is to be judged by the light it throws upon the inception and the development of that quality of life. It is to be judged, not by some bit of folklore, or some piece of immorality which was inevitable in those earlier periods, or some faulty scientific reference made according to the immature knowledge of those primitive times—it is to be judged finally by the amount of moral insight and spiritual dynamic it yields to those whose minds are saturated with its truths. Let any man judge it in

that larger way, and he will have no curses to utter upon the influence of this book.

The same sound principle may be applied to our appraisal of the Christian Church. The forces of evil are always saying, "Come over here where you will see only some fragment of the history of the Christian Church, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Spanish Inquisition, the cold, corrupt formalism of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Russia. Look at the moral stupidity of the Church for years in its attitude toward the sin of slavery, toward the evils connected with the sale of intoxicants, toward social wrongs in our industrial life. See what a poor, imperfect institution the Church has been."

I talked once with a man at the head of a large business, who was condemning the whole Christian Church because of a single remark which he had heard made thirty-five years before by a single minister in a single church in the city where he lived. What a flimsy, foolish method of judging one of the great historic institutions in human society.

Bring in all of the failures and blunders, and crimes, if you please, of organized religion. They make a sorry showing—we have nothing to say

about them except that we are ashamed of them all. But bring in also the plain facts of another sort. Where in the whole history of the race can one find another institution which has stood so clearly, through the dark ages as well as through the bright ones, for high ideals, for justice, for human brotherhood, for education, for charity? For long periods of time the Christian Church was the main hope of the race. Go out now and find a healthy, active, well-organized church and ask yourself where one can find (except in some other Christian church) a body of people who will average as well in high aspiration, in everyday conduct, in generous interest in all forms of philanthropy, in their readiness to share their substance with the less fortunate. Find any other group of people, met together and acting in concert, who can spell them down in those worthy qualities of life.

Hear this statement of solid fact from one of the best known churchmen of this generation! "Say the worst you will about Christendom, it is nevertheless the place where democracy has had its best chance, where science has at last got under way, where education has been most freely given to children, where poverty has been most tirelessly attacked, where philanthropy has been prac-

ticed on the largest scale, and where today the general public conscience is most disturbed about industrial exploitation and war." It would be unfair to credit all this to Christianity, but it is undeniable that the religion of Christ as taught and promoted by the Christian Church has been "one of the major ingredients in the civilization" where those six important achievements just named stand out like high hills above the plain.

Take this one sample of Church life! When some missionary society wants young men and young women, of sound health, trained intelligence, social grace, and religious devotion, to go out to the frontiers of earth upon a service, which I would regard, after traveling somewhat extensively in this country and in Europe, in Egypt, Syria and Turkey, in India, Japan and China, as the finest expression of moral idealism that I have ever seen—when it wants young people of that type for that service, where does it get them?

It gets them of course from the churches, where they have been nurtured and trained and furnished with spiritual impulse for that chivalrous service. It would never think of looking anywhere else for them. That sort of material is not produced anywhere else. If the Social Settlement, with all its fine qualities, were asked to furnish

candidates to swelter on the Congo or to shiver in Alaska or Labrador, to face the dirt, disease and vice of the crowded sections of the Orient, to brave Boxer outbreaks in China or Armenian massacres in Turkey, it would say at once, "It is not in me." And the Labor Union would promptly add, "It is not in me."

Here is an army of the choicest young people on earth coming out of the churches, not for some pleasure trip, not for some hasty cruise around the world, not for some brief period in a time of emergency like war or sudden disaster, but for life. There is no discharge in their war against evil and human need. They are going out to minister to people, whose faces they have never seen, whose names they do not know, whose languages they cannot as yet speak, but whose needs they have made their own in warmest sympathy. Match them, if one can, from any other quarter. Look not at some ragged fringe of organized religion but at the warp and woof of it, and no one will feel like cursing what manifestly God has not cursed.

This is also a sound method for judging the whole world-process where we find ourselves. We are hearing much these days about taking what is

called "a realistic view of life." Oftentimes it means looking solely or mainly at the ugly, nasty, depressing phases of it. The real world is the whole world, seen and unseen, present and prospective, the fair, the fine and the glad, as well as the base and the mean. We cannot judge that "real world" by some small bit of it, which today is and tomorrow is replaced perhaps by something better. Its deeper meaning does not stand revealed in some preliminary stage of it but by the outcome toward which it tends.

Fix the eyes upon some fag end of human experience, some frightful accident, some terrible tragedy, some sorry lump of misery or corruption, and one may question the worth of life. He may be moved to say, "Where now is thy God? Is there knowledge with the Most High? Does He really care? Can anyone believe that behind all this weltering mass, there is Being, Personality, an Intelligent Purpose, a Benign Will!"

But bear in mind that we do not get at the real meaning of any process, bread making or house building, a surgical operation or a piece of education, by fixing our minds solely upon some fragment of it in its earlier stages. Look ahead toward the outcome. Judge the world-order in that larger way. By the hidden trend and tendency of it, by

those unfulfilled suggestions and intimations of something nobler farther on.

Through untold ages we find written in the rocks, and elsewhere, a long, fascinating story of advance. From atoms to molecules and from molecules to the nebular star dust when the universe was "without form and void!" From the inanimate to the animate, from life without consciousness in the vegetable world (when "the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed and fruit trees yielding fruit after their kind") on to the emergence of conscious forms of life when "the waters brought forth abundantly moving creatures which had life," when the fowls of the air and creeping things and beasts of the field gradually appeared! From the highly organized communities of insect life, such as ants and bees where the individual had such slight significance and the community of life was everything, on to the voluntary partnerships of the higher forms of animal life, with the faint beginnings of reasoned conduct and the rudiments perhaps of moral purpose, on to the thrilling epic of man's intellectual and spiritual development. What an appealing and prophetic saga of progress is to be found in these varied but advancing forms of existence!

How much it means that up out of the primeval



slime have come these finer forms of life we know today. Up from those lower levels where our own brutish ancestors fought together like the beasts that perish, have come these fairer types of human life which today are in control. And the end is not yet. When a well-built ship is a thousand miles at sea, going strong under full sail, it may be trusted to go still further.

Take always the longer, larger view. When the ground is being torn to pieces in the early spring by plow and harrow, it does not look much like feeding the hungry. But wait—wait for the harvest. Do not stop at some little way station, but go on up to the end of the line. When your loaf of daily bread is laid upon your table, bear in mind that,

Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,  
And back of the flour, the mill,  
And back of the mill, the wheat and the shower,  
And the sun, and the Father's will.

When one is shaping up his philosophy of life, let him ask the Spirit of truth, who is the Holy Spirit, to lead him into a knowledge of those larger truths which make men wise and free. Let him come where he can look out broadly upon the whole world-process which enfolds us. Let him

stand for a season in the company of the poets and the philosophers, and the prophets, seeing it all through their eyes. Let him enter into conscious fellowship with One who has shown himself preëminently the Light of the world and the Lord of life.

Let every thoughtful, discriminating person make for himself that more competent survey which will enable him to draw valid conclusions. If he will do this, I am confident that he will at last be led to feel that human experience in the large is a long, well-planned campaign, carried on under the eye and by the aid of One who is from everlasting to everlasting, with a clear prospect of issuing finally in some glorious outcome. "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied"—and we may be sure that what satisfies Him, will satisfy us.

## 8. The Menace of the Crowd

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How many of the Master's personal contacts were altogether casual! There was nothing cut and dried about them. No one had made an appointment with him in advance. They just came along in the day's work.

He was passing through a crowded street, when a suffering woman brushed against him, believing that if she could only touch the hem of his garment, she would be healed. He recognized the appeal of faith and the woman was healed. He was passing through the outskirts of another city, when a blind man shouted after him, hoping that he might receive his sight—and we are told that he did. He stopped at a public well and asked a Samaritan woman for the loan of her cup—"Give me a drink"—and it led to a conversation which changed that woman's whole life. Casual

contacts they were, all of them, yet each one meant the upward movement of a human soul.

He "entered and passed through Jericho." He had no speaking engagements there apparently—he was just passing through on his way perhaps from Galilee to Jerusalem by way of the Jordan valley. He found the streets lined with people—it was like the Fourth of July or Labor Day in one of our cities. The people were eager to see this teacher, this healer, this leader in a movement which might mean a new quality of life for their whole nation. There was such a crowd that unless one were strong enough to elbow his way to the front, or tall enough to see over the heads of others, he had not a dog's chance to see anything.

There was one man on the street that day who "sought to see Jesus but could not for the crowd." "He was little of stature," yet he was the richest man in Jericho. He was the Collector of Internal Revenue for that district. The tax collector in any community is not likely to be as popular as Santa Claus, but there in Palestine where the taxes were farmed out at that time, the people hated him as they hated the devil. Some man would pay the Roman Government a fixed sum for the right to collect taxes in a given area, and then take all he could get. One sees instantly how this opened the

way for no end of graft and extortion. The people called the tax collectors "publicans and sinners." They stood socially about where bootleggers stand with us. They could not even go to church without hearing some Pharisee say, "Thank God, I am not unjust, an extortioner, an adulterer, or even as this publican"—this tax collector. Zaccheus that day was simply an undersized, unpopular man in a crowd, which robbed him of any sense of significance. His own personal interests were menaced by the mob.

He had to get out of the crowd in order to see the Lord. He found himself nothing but a helpless atom in that mass of humanity. Had he been instructed in our modern phraseology, which seems so precious and diverting to some people, he too might have suffered from "an inferiority complex." He might have called himself "a parasite infesting the epidermis of a midge among the planets." He was "in the jam"—it was like the rush hour in the subway or like the crowd in some huge stadium on the day of a great football game. Hated as he was, people would not allow him to elbow his way to the front. No tall person would stand aside to allow Zaccheus to see—there was no "after you, please" for tax collectors. He was cut off from any chance of seeing the Master, as

completely as if he had been walled up in a stone prison. Unless he got out of the crowd, there was no vision for him.

The multitude and the solitude—each one has its place. The more vital experiences, however, do not come to a man in a traffic jam. The crowd cuts off one's sight of that which is supreme and lasting. If one would see something, hear something, feel something out of the ordinary, something that is really worth while, he must ever and anon detach himself from the crowd. If he would gain insight, poise, stability, self-control, he must be alone at times, for these high qualities do not readily take shape where people are massed together.

In order to see, one needs to draw away from the thoughtless swarms of people who throng the moving picture places. He needs to separate himself from the hordes of people in their automobiles who form an endless procession on the highways on holidays and on Sundays. He had best withdraw from the myriads of people who have the habit of burying their noses and their minds in the flimsiest sort of reading matter. One cannot see anything to speak of in those situations. Let him get up and out and away from all that, where he can look off unhindered upon a horizon

bounded by nothing nearer than the sky and the being of God.

How many people are helpless, pitiable victims of the tyranny of the crowd. Mob psychology and mob customs! The Joneses are doing it, and the Smiths, and the Browns—therefore the Johnsons feel that they must. They may not care for it in any way—they may be bored by it unspeakably, but they must be “in the swim,” swept along by the current. Everyone has his own fingerprints. Down to the last detail, we are all different. You are “you”—and there has never been another person exactly like you—and I am “I.” Why should not everyone stand on his own feet, think his own thoughts, act according to those principles which seem to him wise and right, live his own life, without feeling himself forever under the thumb of some thoughtless bunch!

“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.” I will see the high places in human experience. “Whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” There are people who with open vision behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, until they are changed into the same image.

When brokers are rushing about like mad men

on the floor of the stock exchange in their eager desire to make money on some quick change in the market; when people are fairly climbing over each other at some crowded reception, each one talking at the top of his lungs in order to make himself heard above the din caused by a lot of other people talking at the top of their lungs; when men and women are buried fifty feet deep, beyond any hope of a resurrection, under a lot of sham, make-believe, convention and pretense (where no one is even trying to be his own true self), what can one expect? The finer qualities of mind and heart, love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, do not grow in a soil like that. One reason why people go to church, is that they may get away for an hour from that fret and fuss, and have a chance to see something, hear something, feel something, vital and lasting.

There was that rich man in Jericho—he had money to burn, but he wanted to see the Lord. He was tremendously in earnest about it. He too had heard of this man of Nazareth, who spake as never man spake, who forgave men's iniquities and healed their diseases, who redeemed their lives from defeat and satisfied their needs with good things, so that their strength was renewed. He could not see the Master "because of the



crowd"—he therefore ran on ahead "and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way." Imagine the Mayor of a city, or the Collector of Internal Revenue, or the richest man in town, climbing a tree in order to see a teacher of religion! But there he was, peering out through the branches that day when the Master came along.

When Jesus saw him, he called him at once into a closer relation to Himself. "Zaccheus," he said to the man in the tree—that was the man's name, but no one in Jericho ever called him that. The people there called him "wolf," "dog," "swine," because he was a tax collector. It meant everything to hear his name spoken in his own hometown in tones of respect—it was like a cup of cold water on a hot day. It put the man at once into a better frame of mind. "Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house." Zaccheus had a good home, plenty to eat, all the necessary materials for hospitality, but no respectable person in Jericho would accept his invitations. "Eat with a tax collector!" That was why Jesus had to invite himself.

"Zaccheus made haste and came down and received him joyfully." The two men walked down

street together as friends. Zaccheus walked that day as one who dreamed. He had meat to eat which the thoughtless knew not of. He might almost have been singing to himself, "O Master, let me walk with thee."

"When the people saw it, they all murmured." Gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner! Screw loose somewhere! A man is known by the company he keeps! If this man were a prophet, he would not have come to Jericho and passed by all the leading church members in order to take dinner with a tax collector. They were horrified, as some people were horrified when a certain President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, invited Booker T. Washington, a Negro, to break bread with him at the White House. The kingdom of heaven had not fully come at that time in the city of Jericho, just as it has not fully come as yet in the city of Washington.

Jesus heard them sneer, and he went straight ahead, side by side with that publican, as serenely as if he had been walking with the angels through the streets of the New Jerusalem. The menace of the crowd was not taken seriously by him. He stood high enough to see over their heads—his eyes rested upon a broader, finer prospect.

He was ready always to pay the full price of

doing good in his own way. Bigotry and race prejudice had no place in his plan of action. He was willing to face the ridicule and suspicion of the mob in order to put himself in open alliance with the best he saw in the natures of those he would help. His enemies called him "the friend of publicans and sinners." He accepted the title and gloried in it, as if they had conferred upon him some honorary degree. He was "just that," he said. "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick." He was "the Great Physician" and his business was with the sick. "I come not to call the righteous"—people who think that they are good enough already just as they are—"but sinners to repentance"—that is to try again and do better. There was never an hour when the Master was not being wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities, that by his stripes, they might be healed.

He picked that sinful man, hated by all his fellow townsmen, out of a tree, and led him forth by the right way. The two men broke bread that day at the table of Zaccheus—they broke the unseen bread which comes down from above to give life unto the world. What do you suppose they talked about at dinner? I think that I know. I am sure that they did not talk about the weather,

nor about business conditions in Jericho at that time, nor about the fact that the water in the river Jordan, which flowed near by, was lower than usual that season. I am sure that they did not talk in bitter fashion about those people who had sneered. The One who said, "Love your enemies; bless those who curse you; do good to those who hate you; pray for those who spitefully use you," never struck back. Men might stone him, but he never stoned them. He said "Father, forgive them."

I know what they talked about—they talked about religion, the most vital, the most interesting, the most rewarding subject of conversation, that anyone can name. What do we mean by religion? When we strip away the husk and wrapping and get down to the real corn in the ear, what do we find?

The essence of religion is not to be found in a lot of intricate, puzzling dogmas which most people never quite understand. The essence of religion is not to be found in some vast array of forms and ceremonies, which to a great many people seem unreal. The essence of religion is not to be found in some elaborate system of polity, whereby certain groups of God's children separate themselves from other groups of God's

children. The One who said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd," showed scant regard for that spirit of exclusiveness. There are hordes of people in any crowd, who think that religion is like that—this indicates how blind they are.

Religion is something inward and vital. Religion is the soul's awareness of the presence of the Spirit of God, manifested to us supremely in Jesus Christ, and the response of the soul to that Presence in reverent, obedient trust and heartfelt devotion. It is that personal experience of the Eternal Verities which purifies, fortifies and enriches the inner life beyond any other influence to be named. That is what those two men talked about at dinner—the results of their conversation, as they stand recorded, show that.

What an hour it was for that dishonest little man to be taken out of the crowd and brought face to face with the Lord of life at his own table! Here within speaking distance, within arm's length, was the Son of Man revealing this man to himself and helping him to realize his own true self. Zaccheus, a publican and a sinner, a grafter and a miser, hated and despised by all his fellow townsmen—aye, he was all that! But Zaccheus

also, potentially, a son of Abraham, a child of the covenant, a man capable of having his part in that kingdom of God on earth in which all nations are to be blessed.

The man within the man, the higher capacity of the man in waiting, the better nature of the man now overborne by his own evildoing but destined to come into its own! It was that which Jesus saw that day. It was that with which he desired to have fellowship. When Zaccheus got out of the crowd that he might see the Lord, turning his back upon the presence of the mob, he was brought at once into close, personal fellowship with the Highest and Holiest Being who ever walked this earth. When the meal was over, the Master could say, "Today, salvation has come to this house. Zaccheus also is a son of Abraham, for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." He had restored to that man's life something which had been lost out of it.

Then, without an hour's delay, the Master sent him back into the crowd again to shew what the Lord had done for him. There at the table they talked about religion. It was a religion which was not all up in the air, made up mainly of rhapsodies and high-sounding phrases. The Master made re-

ligion as real as life itself. When the meal was over, this stingy, little grafter was saying, "Lord, if I have taken anything from any man wrongfully" (he knew that he had, many a time—that was one of the ways in which he had become the richest man in Jericho) "I restore him fourfold." Four for one! That was restitution, "good measure, shaken down, pressed together, and running over." When any man is ready to sing his song of penitence in that key—four sharps, as it were—we know that he has the real thing in his heart. "I will restore fourfold to every man I have wronged."

He had been dishonest, and he had also been stingy. He gets up at the very place where he had fallen down. "I restore, I give! Half of my goods, I give to the poor." Give was a new word for Zaccheus. Buy and sell, get and gain, hold and invest—all these words he could pronounce and spell and live. But the word "give"—he could scarcely get it out at first—it almost stuck in his throat like Macbeth's "Amen," when he had most need of blessing. It was like Sanscrit to Zaccheus, yet in that hour when salvation came to his house, he bravely uttered it. "The half of my goods, I give to the poor."

That took him at once back into the crowd. The

men he had wronged, to whom he was to restore fourfold, were not there in his own house—they were out there in the crowd. The needy people he was to help with the half of all his goods were not there at his own table—they were scattered about in the poorer parts of the city. It was out there in the street that Zaccheus began to let his light shine, that men might see his good work and glorify the Father.

How “realistic” it all is! It might well satisfy these extreme modernists who are half-crazy over what they call “realism.” Tears can be easily shed, and often they have no more significance than so much rainwater. Remorse is cheap—it may be nothing more than the discomfort which some bad man feels upon being found out. But repentance which shows itself in restoring fourfold, and giving away half of all it has to help the needy, is more precious than rubies. It means an about-face, a change of front, the cutting out of evil, the forward, upward movement of a human soul. Back into the crowd, this changed man went to do just that.

Divine help can be gained at the mountaintop (as we see in that story of the Transfiguration) but the new life has to be lived where the people are massed together. The Master prayed at the



mountaintop, in white raiment with his face shining like the sun, and then straightway, he came down to the foot of the mountain to heal a sick boy.

One of the glaring weaknesses of those oriental religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and all the rest, lies in the fact that while they are strong on reflection, meditation and a subtle spiritual philosophy, when the hour strikes for positive, constructive action, they are deplorably weak. Those picturesque Swamis, who come over here from time to time to lecture in hotel parlors to a lot of nearsighted people, on "The Beauty and Glory of the Ineffable What," would have about as much value for the building of a better social order, as a few dear old ladies would have in a football game.

"Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," Jesus said. That is one aspect of religion—the perpendicular aspect. It is an important and a necessary aspect. Reach up, that you may receive grace and guidance to do your best work.

"Love your neighbor"—the man near you, the man who needs you—in the same personal, practical way that you love yourself. That is the other aspect of religion—the horizontal aspect. On these two aspects of religion hangs our whole

case. When a man really has the love of God in his heart, he looks at once upon the needs of the crowd to find some one whom he can help. He knows that inasmuch as we do it unto the least of these, we do it unto Him.

It is natural to cherish a certain dread of the mob spirit, the mob psychology, and to shun those ways of life which are characteristic of the crowd. But to tell the whole truth at last, it has to be borne in mind, that the Master loved the crowd. The people knew it—"the common people heard him gladly," because they felt that he cared. He spoke their language and entered sympathetically into their struggles. He had been tried at all points as they were being tried. He bore their griefs and carried their sorrows. He waited upon the Father for the renewal of his strength, yet he never got too far away from the crowd to reach out a hand of help, warm, friendly, ungloved. And when he breaks bread with his followers today, either in his own house and at his table, or in their homes and at their tables (as he broke bread that day in the home of Zaccheus), he bids them "go and do likewise." For he that dwelleth in the spirit and practice of good will toward his fellow beings, dwelleth in God and God in him, for God is good will.

## 9. Right Standards

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“How much then is a man better than a sheep?” These strange words fell one day from the lips of the Master. It is, however, a fair question—How much better is a man than a sheep? If it came to a try-out, would the man always come out ahead?

It all depends. It depends upon the sort of yardstick one uses, upon the scale of values one employs. If it is a question of size, there are some sheep which would weigh more on the scales than some men. If it is a question of money, there are blooded sheep of rare breed which have been sold for eight thousand dollars each. There are men sitting on the park benches in all our cities every summer who would not bring anything like that much, if they were put up for sale and bids were asked. If it is a question of wool to be made into

warm blankets, the sheep wins—there is no wool on the body of a man. And I suppose that on an average, the sheep of the world would show a larger measure of satisfaction and contentment than would the men of the world. I wonder if a man really is better than a sheep.

Almost anyone would say instantly that any man is better than any sheep. He is a better prospect for the investment of time and thought, of money and effort, than any sheep on earth. But to reach that appraisal, he turns his back upon those measurements I have just named. He moves up into another realm of values altogether. There are, I admit, values as real as granite, which cannot be weighed on the scales nor turned into cash nor made into blankets. They demand for their appraisal another technique altogether.

We have certain qualities in common with the sheep. A man has life and a sheep has life—but what a difference! Life is not always the same thing. Through all its subtle gradations, from the first tremors shown by the nerves of an angle-worm, or some low form of marine life, up to the delicate vibrations of gray matter in the brain of Edison or Einstein, it is all life. But what a wide range of estimates we place upon those varied forms of life! And how much depends upon the

sort of measurements we use! How important it is to have standards that are really valid.

What are some of the standards by which men commonly size one another up? Here are four which are much in evidence. The first, the easiest, and the crudest, is the money standard. "How much is Jones worth?" one man asks another. "Jones—he is worth fifty millions of dollars." Ordinarily neither of those two men is thinking about the worth of Jones. They are thinking merely about the cash value of the things Jones happens to own. This can be readily ascertained from the assessor's book or from Bradstreet. The worth of Jones himself is another matter altogether. That has to do with his qualities of mind and heart. It is a question of personality, the strength of it, the quality of it, the flavor of it. Here the assessor's book tells us nothing whatever. The worth of a man cannot be stated in dollars and cents.

Yet how frightfully common, and alas! in the minds of millions of people, how final is that money standard. We go about measuring each other, not with yardsticks or tape lines but with bank notes. Here is a man who is fifty thousand feet high—not very tall, scarcely worth men-

tioning. Here is another man who is two hundred thousand feet high. He makes a much better showing—we can see him with the naked eye. But there stands Jones, who is fifty million feet high. His head is so far above the financial level where most of us move about, that we can scarcely distinguish his features.

How misleading it all is. How little it tells us about the worth of those men. Jones may be worth a great deal in addition to his fifty millions. He may, on the other hand, be of so little account that it would not be worth while to put down his name in the trial balance—it would not affect the result.

Money is a very nice thing—a very necessary thing—no man of sense ever speaks scornfully of money. But it is meant to be “a servant in the house” and not the master of the situation. So long as it keeps its place and ministers to the human values, well and good. The moment it tries to climb up and sit upon the throne and make the profit motive the dominant factor in our human affairs, it becomes a menace.

“My purse, ’tis something, nothing! ’Twas mine, ’tis his, and has been slave to thousands.” But whether it is full or almost empty, it is never anything but a tool. The current ideals at that

point have changed, I am sure, within the last fifty years. When I was a boy in college, the names of the richest men in America were names to conjure with. They sent a thrill through any popular audience. It is not so now. It depends upon the personal characters of those men who own the huge fortunes, upon how much public spirit they have shown, upon how much of the sense of social responsibility they have, upon the measure of consideration they manifest for their fellow men in the accumulation and the administering of their wealth. Even the people in the street are saying now, "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world of things, and then lose out on himself in the quality of life he shows!"

Here in the Gospel of Luke, the Master drew a striking cartoon which will hang there until time is no more. "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully," and his eyes were always on the ground. He never looked up—he had no standards aboveground. He was a farmer and he filled his barns to the eaves with good things. He built still larger barns and filled them. Then he said to himself, "Soul"—I suppose he thought that he was talking to his soul, whereas he was addressing another part of his anatomy altogether—"Soul, take thine ease. Eat, drink, be

merry." Have a good time—you have goods enough laid up to last a thousand years.

Then the swift, sharp march of events said to him, "Thou fool! This night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be?" Not his—he could not take a penny of all that wealth with him. "How much did he leave?" He left all he had. He became conscious in that hour that the only thing he could take with him was himself—and in an hour of solemn self-scrutiny, that seemed most meager. "So is every one," the Master added as he signed his name at the bottom of the cartoon, "who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God"—not rich in those values which make life genuinely human. The standards furnished by material accumulation are fleeting and flimsy—they tell us almost nothing about the worth of a man.

There are the standards furnished by social position. How differently men and women are placed. Does this individual in question sit above the salt? How far above? Is he anywhere near the head of the table? Does he by any chance sit at the right hand of high privilege?

In all of our cities, there are men and women—women especially—who would give their right



hands and their left hands and all their other hands, if they had any more, to be received into what they call "society." They want to come in and sit down in what seems to them "the kingdom of heaven," not with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob always—quite the contrary—but with the duly accredited members of the Four Hundred. They are not much concerned apparently as to whether their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, but they would like very much to see their names in clear type in some Blue Book or Social Register. Those are the standards by which they appraise themselves and their fellow beings. They are "climbers"—their eyes are fixed steadily on the "upper crust."

The same foolish spirit showed its ugly head when the Master was here—and upon that occasion, also, it was the social ambition of a woman. "The mother of Zebedee's children came to him with her two sons, worshipping him"—she was very respectful in her manner of approach—"and desiring a certain thing. 'Grant that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom.'"

Then the Master looked into her eyes and into theirs, and said, "Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink the cup that I drink of? and be baptized

with the spirit that I am baptized with? . . . Ye know that among the Gentiles, the great ones exercise lordship and dominion. They that would be great have authority," and lord it over their fellows. "It shall not be so among you. If any one would be great among you, let him serve. The greatest of all is the servant of all." Usefulness is greatness—there is no other greatness worth mentioning. Social distinctions are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

How cleverly Dean Gauss of Princeton has written about "The Pretensions of Leadership" in his stimulating book *Life in College*. It is the best book on college life that I have read in the last thirty years. He holds up that misused and outworn phrase "potential leadership" and lets daylight into it.

In round numbers there are just about one million young men and young women in the colleges and universities of this country. In the very nature of the case, they cannot all of them, even with the best intentions in the world and all the earnest effort imaginable, become leaders. Where would we get the necessary material to fill up the ranks of the "led"? They would best not be thinking too much about leadership—here as everywhere the man who saves his life, loses it.

The young fellow in college who forgets all about "leadership" in striving to do his work, right up to the handle, six days in the week, as well as it lies within the power of a chap of his size to do it, is all the while developing those qualities of persistence, loyalty, manliness, which have infinite worth. He is twisting the fiber of daily experience into a strong rope. He may be studying chemistry, or any other subject one might name. If he is really studying it, trying to master the principles of his subject, trying to penetrate just a bit farther into the mysteries of this natural order which enfolds us, he may when he is fifty years old be a good chemist, and be regarded by all his fellow chemists as a leader. In any field, if a man would be great, let him serve. There is no other way. Here are standards which are valid—they do not rest upon the mere accidents of social position.

We come then to the standards furnished by learning. These are far and away worthier than the money standards or the social ratings. We have been told on high authority to "Get wisdom. Get understanding. It is the principal thing—more to be desired than rubies; more precious than fine

gold. A tree of life to those that lay hold upon her!"

In circles made up of intelligent people, the real worth of any man's life is ascertained ordinarily not by weighing him on the scales, nor by measuring the size of his roll of bank notes, nor by looking in the Social Register. The measure of the man is to be found in those curious gray convolutions of the brain which make possible his intellectual life, and in the amount of knowledge he has acquired by the use of that brain.

Here surely a man is better than a sheep. The sheep has some intelligence. It knows enough to come in when it rains or snows. It knows enough to eat green grass, when it can get it, rather than try to feed upon the dust of the ground. It knows enough to exercise a certain care over its young, feeding them, guiding them, protecting them, as far as may be, until they are able to shift for themselves. The sheep have a certain sort of language—the older sheep can call to the lambs. They can bleat to their owners, when they are cold or hungry or in danger. The sheep, however, have never made any scientific discoveries. They have never devised any system of education to increase their knowledge. The sheep of the world are probably not one whit more intelligent today

than were the sheep which David watched on those Judean hills three thousand years ago. Intellectually speaking, man is ever so much better than a sheep.

Now far be it from me, connected as I have been for more than twenty years with one of the oldest universities in this country, to utter a syllable in depreciation of the value of sound learning. Would that we all had more brains—more even than we think we have, which is a still larger order. Would that we had made more diligent and competent use of those brains. Would that with all the splendid advance which has been made, we had solved still more of the mysteries of this marvelous universe.

We would all hold learning in high esteem and we have coined our appreciation of it into familiar proverbs. "Knowledge is power." "The world belongs to the man who knows." "All the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto wisdom." In any company of thoughtful people, the names to conjure with are such names as Plato and Aristotle, Homer and Dante at one end of the line, and Darwin and Huxley, Pasteur and Metchnikoff, Edison and Einstein at the other. Great is the power of learning—here the poor sheep is not even in the running.

Even so, have we touched bottom? Have we reached a standard worthy to be called final? Have we named that which makes man, any man and every man, better than all the sheep on earth? Size, money, position, learning—they all have a certain value, but they all stop short. There is something beyond all that—something which is distinctively and permanently human.

The final standards are the spiritual standards, even as the final forces in human society are those spiritual forces which have to do with the formation of character. However it came about, here we are self-conscious, self-directing, aspiring spirits capable of reaching out for the best there is.

However it came about? Some people may think that it came about suddenly like snapping one's finger. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"—and there he was. The more thoughtful believe that it came about as the result of a long, patient, orderly process of development, the lower forms of life developing into something higher, ever into something higher. When the Bible says that God made man out of material already on hand (presumably the best material to be had) and then breathed into him the breath of His own mighty life until man

also became a living soul, it is a picture. It is the picture of a process, which may have extended through long periods of time. In whatever way it was done, as a result of all those forces behind us, about us, within us, above us, human personality is here, the very highest fact we know anything about on earth. The basic fact in the moral life of the world is respect for personality.

Through long periods of time and over wide areas of experience, human personality has found peace and joy and progress through fellowship with that divine spirit manifested to us supremely in Jesus Christ. He seems to have an affinity for this human nature of ours which is unmatched. In man's capacity for that fellowship and in the record of his advance in character, we find that which makes him superior to the whole animal creation.

The highest values always are those spiritual values which are found only in human beings—the sheep know nothing about them. They are not even suggested by the world of material things which bulks so large in many minds. We are “appraised,” as George A. Buttrick says,<sup>1</sup> “by this simple but final test, ‘Do we see faces or things?’ There are business men who see only things,—

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus Came Preaching*, p. 120.

sales-resistance, charts, profits; there are other business men who see faces—the faces of those who work for them and the faces of those who have no work. There are statesmen who see only things—battleships, voting-booths, newspaper-headlines; and there are other statesmen who see faces—faces of the poor, faces of little children, and myriad faces slain in war. There are would-be preachers who see only things—church buildings, card-indices, year-book figures; and there are other preachers, ordained by a tenderness beyond the hand of man, who see faces—faces wistful and sin-scarred, lonely and brave. Jesus saw nothing on earth but faces; nothing in heaven but faces; nothing in hell but faces. Always he swung the conversation back to the human.”

Here is man facing the vast physical order which enfolds him saying to himself all the while, “I am the master of my fate, the captain of my soul.” “The Eternal is my dwelling place and underneath there are everlasting arms.” “He holds me with his right hand, guides me with His counsel, and afterward He will receive me to glory.” Man is the only being, so far as we know, who has the capacity to look up and claim that sense of fellowship with his Maker. And he claims it—“Thou dost shew me the path of life. In thy pres-



ence there is fulness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Man is the only being who can say that, and feel it, and grow up at last into the full realization of it.

John Henry Jowett used to say, "The finest action springs always from the largest consciousness of reality. If a man lacks vision, if he has no outlook upon life, except into the narrow back-yard of his own petty self-conceit, then of necessity his conduct will be weak and mean." If anyone would rise above the animal level, where some people, alas! seem content to remain, let him adapt himself to the sum total of his environment, not merely outwardly on the dead level but upward as well. Let him claim the necessary material and the requisite relationships to live a life worthy to be called human. Let him make himself at home with the great spiritual objectives, God and Christ, the habit of prayer, the fellowship of the Church, the hope of future life.

One can raise some insignificant plant in the small flower pot of a hothouse. The oaks and the sequoias demand the bosom of mother earth and the open sky. If one means to live, he needs to move out and move up where he belongs. He must enter into that larger consciousness of reality, that wider range of relationship which belongs to hu-

man life at its best. In a word, he needs to do what that young man did of old, set down though he was in the pagan city of Babylon. "He kneeled upon his knees, three times a day, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, and prayed" to the God of his fathers. With that spiritual frontage for his life and that sense of a mighty Unseen Power laying hold upon his inmost soul, he made advance. He finally brought his life "up to the style and manners of the sky." And that is the final standard for every life. Ye therefore shall be round, entire, complete, even as the life of your Father in heaven is complete.

## 10. Living Under Pressure

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In the last book of the Bible, we see a great multitude standing before the Throne, singing with all their might, "clothed with white robes," indicating the sort of lives they had been living, and "with palms in their hands," as emblems of the victory they had won. They had "come up out of great tribulation." "*Thlipsis*"—it is a word which runs all through the New Testament. It means literally "pressure." They had been living under pressure. "We must enter the kingdom of God," the apostle said, "through tribulation"—the same word again. We enter the kingdom of God under pressure. There is nothing else for it—there is no other way in. Christian life does not mean following the line of least resistance. If anyone would be His disciple, he must be prepared to practice self-denial, take up his duty, and carry on in the very

teeth of opposition. The leading symbol of our Christian faith is not an easy chair—it is a cross. “These are they who came up under pressure.”

In the very nature of the case, Christian life means conflict. The man who is a Christian is not having an easy time. He never has had, and in this world he never will, so long as he is true to his principles. How many times here in that last book in the Bible promises are made to those who “overcome.” “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.” “To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the tree of life.” “To him that overcometh, I will give a white stone with a new name written on it, which no man knows save he that receiveth it.” The “new name” was not some ordinary name, like Smith or Jones or Brown—the new name indicated the man’s hidden capacity for something finer than anything he had yet achieved. “To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne.” The victor would share in that Christian leadership which was to usher in the kingdom of God on earth. This ancient seer saw that the fight was on, and he stood there on the side-lines, cheering for those who had the moral

courage not to run away like cowards, but to stand by and overcome.

Does all this sound rather militant for these quiet, uneventful Christian lives of ours? Go out into the thick of commercial life and stand for the idea that business is not meant to be the selfish squabble of a lot of hungry animals for the best bones. Business is meant to be a profession, with its own fine sense of professional honor and its own high standards of professional ethics. Business is meant to be a social utility, a means of bringing together the resources of earth and the needs of human society. Business is meant to be an expression of the spirit of human brotherhood in terms of economic life. Let any man stand for that, and he will know what it means to live "under pressure."

Go to some meeting of the "Big Navy League," or some congress of "One Hundred Per Centers," as they like to call themselves. Tell them right to their faces that nations as well as individuals must learn to live by the law of human brotherhood. "Look not every man on his own things but every man also upon the things of others." Look not each nation upon its own advantage and profit, but each nation also upon the rights and interests

of other nations. It is the only way. Let any man stand out clear-cut for those principles and methods of national and international usage, and he will find that Christian life is not as easy as rolling off a log.

There was more truth than poetry in the old hymn which our grandfathers used to sing.

Shall I be carried to the skies,  
On flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize  
And sailed through bloody seas?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign,  
Increase my courage, Lord,  
I'll bear the cross, endure the pain  
Supported by thy word.

"In this world," the Master said, "ye shall have tribulation"—the same word again. You will be compelled to live seven days in the week under pressure. "But be of good cheer, I have overcome." By his grace, we can. If anyone wants what William James, of Harvard, called "The moral equivalent of war," as a necessary discipline, it is right here laid ready to our hand the moment we take the Master seriously.

It was not a clergyman, nor an officer in the Salvation Army, who spoke these wise words—

it was the great writer Goethe, who knew something about human nature.

Who never ate his bread with tears,  
Who never through the troubled hours  
Weeping sat upon his bed,  
He knows you not, ye heavenly powers.

That one outstanding life in Palestine, which has changed the whole moral history of the race, "learned obedience," we are told, "by the things that he suffered." He gained insight and character by the discipline of pain. We are commanded "to fill up that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ." We are to complete what he so nobly began. It is a challenge to be met, if we are to show ourselves worthy to bear his name as Christians.

Here was Charles Lamb, with a delicate, sensitive temperament. When he was twenty-one years old, he went home one day to find that his sister, in a temporary fit of insanity, had murdered their mother. He at once braced himself for what proved to be a lifelong ordeal. He gave up all thought of marriage and a family of his own, to make himself the companion of that disordered mind. He secured her release from the courts by agreeing to make himself personally responsible

for her safekeeping. She suffered many times from a relapse and had to be sent away for a season to some sanitarium, but he always brought her back again to his own home. He carried on with his head up and the light of love in his eyes. "Charles and Mary Lamb," we always say, coupling their names together, because he lived with and for her. He lived also to write the *Essays of Elia*, and to win for himself an honorable and a permanent place in the world of English letters. "He beat his music out," and the charm and sweetness of it have brought cheer and solace to many a heavy heart. We enter the kingdom of heaven under pressure—there is no other way in.

The night brings out the stars unseen by day. The dark hours of trial and disappointment reveal to us abiding realities in the spiritual firmament which stood before unnoticed. The uses and the gains of suffering are many because it "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," looking, as we do, not at the things which are seen and temporal but at those unseen values which are eternal.

When we march with Him, we march to victory. No other single influence can be named which brings such an accession of spiritual dy-



namic for the living of a right life, as the sense of fellowship with some one stronger and finer than we are. How much human friendships mean! David draws from Jonathan for the renewal of his own strength. Damon is a better man for his contact with Pythias. Many a strong man sings his whole life song on a higher key because of the devoted companion at his side. She may not weigh anything like as much as he does on the scales, but he adds cubits to the stature of his inner life through the inspiration which comes from her affection.

How much more then when we have the sense of fellowship with the One whose name is above every name, the One who so lived that he became the Light of men, the true Light that lighteth every man. He gave himself heroically to the service of his people, yet when they cast him off and he saw that he must die a painful, humiliating death between two thieves (as if he too had been a criminal), he did not flinch. We hear him praying there in the Garden, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass." He prayed again and again and again, until at last we hear him say, "If it cannot pass, except I drink it, not my will but thine be done." He went right on to do that will. He took the road which led across the brow of Calvary,

but on to the Easter morning. "He tasted death for every man," and in doing that, "brought life and immortality to light." He overcame—and it is his friendship that we crave.

When John Bright's young wife died, leaving him alone with a little motherless child, the light went out of his life. He felt that the sun had gone down upon his desolate home never to rise again. But the next day after the funeral, Richard Cobden came to see him. Cobden was a true friend, and when he held John Bright's hand in his own firm, warm clasp, he said to him, "While you sit here in your great sorrow, thousands of women and children are dying from starvation here in England because of unjust laws. Come with me presently, and we will not rest until those wicked corn laws are repealed."

John Bright went, and he tells us that in his fight for social justice something new developed within him which enabled him to stand up under his bereavement. He fought side by side with Cobden. And because he was a Christian, a Quaker, a devout man, he fought side by side with Him. He won out by his Christian faith.

Shallow men are not so—they are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. When the sower went forth to sow, his seed fell on four kinds of

soil. It fell where the ground was hard. It gained no entrance into that soil—the birds ate it and nothing came of that sowing. It fell where the ground was foul with weeds. The weeds “sprang up and choked it,” and it became unfruitful. It fell where the soil was thin. It sprang up immediately, yet “because it had no depth of earth, it speedily withered away.” But some seed fell into good ground and brought forth thirty, sixty, here and there even a hundred fold. When Jesus explained this parable to his disciples, he said that the seed sown where the soil was thin represented those lives which had no roots. They “endured for a while,” but “when persecution or tribulation”—the same old word again—came (when pressure was put upon them), they “withered away.” They had no hidden source of strength upon which to draw.

I shall never forget the first real impulse to do my best which came to me from outside my own home. I had come in from the farm, an awkward country boy more familiar with plowed ground than with sidewalks, to prepare for college at a small academy. The Principal of the Academy was a man strong, fine, true. I admired him more than any other man I had ever seen up to that time. Young people in those days had little auto-

graph albums in which they asked their friends to write their names, with a line or two of sentiment perhaps. Most people wrote, "Lives of all great men remind us" or "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul," or some such hackneyed phrase.

I took my little book to the Principal one day—he was not that sort. He wrote in it, "Make up your mind to be of some account in the world—you can do it, if you will," and signed his name, W. P. Johnston. I was only sixteen years old then, but I have that little book now and I have never ceased to feel the force of what he wrote. Make up your mind to be of some account in the world—you can do it, if you will. It was both a challenge and a word of cheer. I read it and looked up into his face, strong, cultured, kindly. I knew that he would help me—and he did.

It is the challenge of a hard task which brings out the best in any life. "Give me this mountain," Caleb said that day when they were dividing up the Land of Promise among the Twelve Tribes. It was rather a forbidding place to establish a home and begin farming, but he took his mountain and mastered the difficulties in the situation in a way that made him still more the rugged leader of his people.

What gave us Cromwell and Lincoln, David

Livingstone and Stanley Jones, General William Booth and Jane Addams? Civil wars, dark continents, city slums. Hard places every one of them. What gave us Wilfred Grenfell? The desolate coast of Labrador and a lot of neglected, forgotten people. The soft sunny corners, where lazy men doze off like house-cats, make no such showing. What gave us that multitude which no man could number, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands? "They came up under pressure," serving Him until his name was in their foreheads. His very nature had been photographed upon them. When we march under his banner, we march with One who does not intend to have his followers go down in final defeat. Palms of victory in their hands!

This pressure accepted and borne brings out certain qualities of life which cannot be had on any easier terms. When the great apostle wrote his letter to that frivolous, worldly city of Corinth, where he had wrought as a minister of Christ through hard but glorious years, what a song of triumph it was. "Perplexed but not in despair! Persecuted but not forsaken! Cast down but not destroyed! Always bearing in my body

the marks of the Lord Jesus"—the character of the One he served had also been photographed upon him. "Though the outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed day by day. Our light affliction"—*thlipsis*, that same old word again—this pressure put upon us, "is but for a moment, and worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The final outcome interprets and justifies the long, rough road traversed.

Steam does all its work under restraint. Turn it loose in the air and it is useless. Confine it under pressure, and it will turn the wheels of industry throughout the world. Here are those who know all about this by hard personal experience. Here are those who know it by having witnessed sympathetically the struggles of those they love. Here are those who are anxiously forecasting the future, wondering what the years ahead will bring. Here are those already conscious of failing physical powers—they are afraid that they will not be equal to the demands made upon them. Here are men in middle life, who feel that they made the wrong choice of a vocation—it is too late now to make a change but they know full well that they missed it. Here are those whose plans for domestic happiness have gone down in defeat. When

they were young, they saw visions and dreamed dreams of bliss to come, but for some reason the wedding cake turned to sawdust. Here they are, another great multitude which no man can number, living along under the weight of all manner of disappointment and dread.

Yet straight in the face of all that, comes the appeal from One who knew what was in life and needed not that any should tell him. "Be of good cheer." He had earned his right to say it. Those words did not come from his lips in some high hour of popular success. They were uttered the night that he was betrayed.

Here was kindness about to be buffeted and mocked by cruelty. Here was purity about to be spurned and spat upon by the lips of bigotry and hatred. Here was Love Incarnate about to be nailed to two rough bars of wood and left there to die. Yet he went down into that valley singing. "Be of good cheer. I have overcome. Peace I leave with you—my peace. These things I have spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." But for that bitter experience and his victory over it, would he ever have become what he is today in the life of the world?

How much it means when one is making his way through a dark forest or climbing the side of a steep mountain, to find any sort of a trail. Other men have passed this way. What men have done, men can do again. Here is a trail of spiritual victory leading on and up and out of all manner of tragic situations. When our purposes are right, when we feel ourselves entrenched in the hearts of those who love us, when we find ourselves allied with the Eternal, as He was allied, we are ready to carry on to the end of the road. Living under pressure—aye, but for high ends.

Here was Robert Louis Stevenson writing to his friend George Meredith that for fourteen years he had never known a single day of health. He wrote most of his books in bed, his throat and lungs rasped and torn by incessant coughing, his head reeling oftentimes through sheer weakness. He had a militant spirit—"I was meant," he said, "for conflict, but the fates have decreed that my battlefield should be a bed and a bottle of medicine."

All the more honor to him that he fought a good fight, kept the faith, and finished his course, writing such robust, manly books as *Treasure*



*Island, Kidnapped, The Master of Ballantrae*, and all the rest. I read *Treasure Island* through about once a year just for the sheer vigor of it and I get almost as much of a thrill out of it as I did when I read it for the first time forty years ago. I wonder if Stevenson would ever have done it but for those years of stern self-discipline. I am sure that he would never have uttered that final trumpet call, when he saw the end approaching.

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie,  
Glad did I live, and gladly die,  
And I lay me down with a will.

It is like a far-away echo of that profounder cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass. But if I must . . . not my will but thine be done."

When I see a congregation of people about to leave a place of worship, I wonder always in what mood and with what thoughts they are going. The main office of a service of worship is to take a company of people as they come up, many of them marred and scarred by the hard knocks of another week, and send them back to their tasks, cheered, heartened, replenished. They that wait upon the Lord in simple, genuine expectation and trust, renew their strength. Their aspirations and their

hopes mount up with wings like eagles. Their renewed faculties are made ready to run in the way of the divine command without growing weary. And their feet can walk the quiet ways of duty and not faint. When we walk in fellowship with Him, we traverse the high road of triumphant advance.

## 11. The Three Crosses

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When Good Friday comes, the eyes of Christian people everywhere turn toward Calvary. They see manifested there, at one time and in one place, something which is vast and timeless. "There was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." There was an eternal heartache and heartbreak over the wrongdoing of the Father's children. He was wounded by their transgressions and bruised by their iniquities. It is that element in the divine character which has become the basis of our hope. He stands ready to forgive our iniquities and to heal our diseases, as One who has suffered because of them. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that revere him, for he knoweth our frame."

We speak ordinarily of "the cross on Calvary." But there were three crosses on that "green hill far away, outside a city wall." Had there been

only one, had the Saviour died there in agony indeed but in solitary dignity, it would have lessened the humiliation of it. But "when they were come to a place called Calvary, there they crucified him and the two thieves, one on the right hand and the other on the left." There were three crosses there that day, his and his and *His*. He was wounded for our transgressions, and two of the transgressors were hanging there beside him in that same hour.

In that rude time hanging on the cross was the direst and most disgraceful form of punishment meted out to criminals of the lowest class. We have clothed the cross with tender, sacred meaning by wrapping around it poetry, sentiment and feeling, but in that day it meant exactly what the gallows means to us. The enemies of the Christian cause would taunt the followers of Christ by saying with a sneer, "Your Messiah was hung, wasn't he?" He was hung outside the city wall between two thieves. The cross was "a scandal to the Jews and a joke to the Greeks." It was only to men of insight and faith that it gradually became "the wisdom of God and the power of God" unto moral recovery.

Look again at all three of those crosses on that green hill far away! There was the cross which

hardened. One of the two thieves, the one who hung on the Master's left, was embittered by that terrible experience. He struck out against it with words of cursing. He was receiving, according to the stern justice of that government, only "the due reward of his deeds," but it made him scornful and rebellious. He turned to the patient sufferer on the central cross, seeing nothing of the noble grandeur of that face in which other men saw the glory of God, and railed on him. "If you are the Messiah, save yourself—and us." He suffered only that pain which makes men hard and mean.

How many times we see just that—the pain which hardens! Here is a rich man meeting with financial reverses which reduce him to poverty. He becomes bitter and rebellious. When his wealth went, his faith went. In prosperity, he was pious—he knew "how to abound." In adversity, he becomes irreligious—he has not learned "how to be abased." "Look at that!" he cries—"What's the use."

Here is a woman pleading and praying frantically for the life of her child, who is sick unto death, as the event proves. When her petition fails, she becomes angry and defiant. The knee stiffened by disappointment now refuses to bend

in prayer. "How does God know?" she cries. "Does the Almighty really care?"

Here is a young man disappointed in his married life. The womanly sympathy and companionship he craved at some time of crisis was for some strange reason withheld. Now he is throwing himself away in unworthy associations, in drink and in hidden licentiousness. He has already become as hard as nails.

Here is a mature person suffering from prolonged ill health. His body is racked with pain, his nerves are all on edge, his head throbs. He feels that the Adversary has put forth his hand and touched his bone and his flesh. He feels ready to curse God and die.

Our hearts go out in instant sympathy to all of those people. Yet how tragic it is. Pain is not always a blessing—it may become a curse. One of the two thieves railed on him saying, "If you are the Messiah, save yourself—and us."

There was also the cross which softened. The other malefactor, hanging there on the right side of the central cross, rebuked his fellow, saying, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due recompense of our deeds. But this

man—*this man* hath done nothing amiss." Even his poor, dim, sinful eyes saw something of that light which never was before on land or sea. It was "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," or goeth out of the world, as that thief was about to go. This man, softened by his pain and by the look of compassion on that face, sobbed out, "Lord! Lord, remember me! Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The One who came to seek and to save that which was lost, heard and honored the appeal. When Jesus passed out of this world, he was carrying that penitent robber in his arms—"into Paradise," he said. There is a pain which moves men to sorrow over their moral failures and to prayers for forgiveness.

How many times also have we seen that. Here is one of the greatest dramas to be found in print. "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. He was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil." But through no fault of his own, he saw all of his property swept away by a series of calamities. He saw all of his ten children killed in a cyclone. He lost his health through the inroads of a loathsome, lingering disease—he was covered with sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. His wife

deserted him in scorn, saying to him hatefully, "Curse God and die." His friends lost their faith in his sincerity, suspecting him of some hidden crime because all these misfortunes, which they regarded as tokens of the divine displeasure, had fallen upon him.

Even so, this man of God will not be driven back, nor thrown down, nor turned aside, nor made bitter, by his misfortunes. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. I will maintain mine own ways before him . . . till I die I will not put away mine integrity. He knows the way that I take. He is testing me, and when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

By his pain, this man became more sympathetic toward others who suffered. He actually knelt down and prayed for those three stiff old bigots who had been rubbing salt and vinegar in his wounds. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends." He was brought, in the days of sore need, into yet closer fellowship with God. There is a pain which, rightly borne, softens and refines.

"All things," the hard things as well as the things which are easy, the dark days as well as the bright ones, "work together," in their final outcome, in the net result they yield, "for good to



those who love God." By pain, men are sometimes softened and made sensitive to the approach of the divine spirit. They are made sympathetic and considerate toward their fellow beings who suffer in their turn. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"—that was the word of confession and appeal which came from the second cross.

There also was the cross which redeems. Here on that central cross was One who hung there, not bemoaning his fate, not denouncing his enemies who were putting him to death, not looking up defiantly into the heavens, which might well have seemed to him that day like brass. He was praying with a tenderness which should have melted hearts of stone. "Father, forgive them. Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Then a moment later, he looked up to say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Can anyone believe that it was only a pitiful delusion which impelled him and enabled him to say that in such a dread hour? Can anyone believe that this experience of Jesus was real only at this end of the line, and not real at the other end?

There is a form of pain, accepted and borne, which can be blessed and used for the moral re-

covery of others. It becomes redemptive. It releases men from the guilt, the stain, the love of doing wrong, in a way that nothing else seems ever to achieve. "Without the shedding of blood," that supreme gift of life itself, "there is no remission of sins." As the Master said, "Except a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. When it dies, it brings forth." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die."

This is what Harry Emerson Fosdick said in his recent book:<sup>1</sup> "Some people, meeting their Armageddon in the experience of disaster, grow rebellious and petulant. Some grow stoical and talk about their heads being bloody but unbowed. Some become resigned and try to bend to the wind without breaking. But some lay hold on their calamity, as Jesus laid hold on his Cross, and use it as the most effective instrument which life has ever fitted to their hand. . . . Always behind such conduct there has been a total personal response to life's meaning, which could not be described in any terms less than religion."

For some reason, needy, erring, sinful people have, through all the ages, gathered around the

<sup>1</sup> *As I See Religion*, p. 180.

Cross of Christ, as if dimly aware that in some way their own eternal salvation was bound up with the forces there manifested on Calvary. They might not have been able to pass much of an examination on the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice. They might never have read Walker's *Plan of Salvation* or McLeod Campbell's *The Nature of the Atonement*. But they saw there a divine love and mercy which stops at nothing in the outreach of its moral interest in us. They saw there a love which "will not let us go," a love that "follows all the way." It is the soul's awareness of the presence of that patient, forgiving, redeeming Spirit, revealed to us supremely on the cross of Christ, and the response of the soul to that Presence in reverent obedient trust and heartfelt devotion, which brings salvation. It is that experience which purifies, fortifies and enriches the inner life.

When John the Baptist looked for the first time upon our Lord, he did not say, "Behold a new and finer system of ethics to be obeyed." He did not say, "Behold a lofty example, a lovely ideal, to be imitated." He did not say, "Behold a more heroic figure to march at the head of the moral procession." He did not say, "Behold an ingenious legal arrangement whereby men may be ac-

counted righteous when they are not." Had that been all, John might as well have saved his breath. No one of those would ever have saved the world from its pain and shame. It was no mere gospel of imitation, or of education, or of culture, which he saw there when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." It was a gospel of redemption, which meant the release and the recovery of all that is high and fine in human nature from the power of evil. What John did actually say was "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

His claim was undergirded by a sound psychology. It is the touch of life warm, direct, potent which changes men's hearts. Faith in Christ, as the supreme manifestation of the character of God and of His moral interest in us, brings at once a fresh supply of power to one's struggle for character. It brings a warmth and an intensity of feeling, a joy and a satisfaction, which come only from the relation of a person to a person. When that Other Person is the One whose name is above every name, the result is that the inner life is transformed by this renewing of the mind.

How finely Henry Sloane Coffin has phrased it in his book on *The Meaning of the Cross*:<sup>2</sup> "Not

<sup>2</sup> Pages 84, 107.

many of the small radio sets in people's homes can as yet pick up directly sounds which come across the Atlantic; but some powerful central station receives and relays them. Then the small radio gets them. Men's minds are often blank in this baffling world—our spirits listen vainly, encompassed apparently by a silent void. Jesus' soul was sensitive and attuned to the Most High. His believing intuitions have been verified. A faithful Father received into His hands this Son and his cause, and Jesus' sacrifice of himself for many, has been the birth-pangs of a new creation. Enduring the Cross, He has become the Pioneer and Perfection of Faith and the Redeemer of men. . . . If one stands beside the ocean on a moonlight night, he sees a straight path of silver from the moon to his own feet. There is no escaping it. If he moves miles in either direction, the beam of light continues to lie directly between him and the moon. So every man who looks wistfully toward the cross, finds a similar direct nexus between the crucified and himself. Christ's sacrifice has a personal meaning for him and in that love he knows his own incalculable worth to God."

Even human friendship, when it takes up its cross and follows Him, has a strange power of healing. There came once to an American prison,

a woman under life sentence, for she had committed murder under conditions peculiarly revolting. She was base and vile. When she was brought there, she assailed the prison officials in language so terrible that, hardened though they were by long contact with criminals, they stood aghast. When the chaplain of the prison and the matron came forward to befriend the woman, she poured out upon them a torrent of profane and obscene abuse, and finally spat in the matron's face.

The matron was a strong, serene, high-minded Christian. She merely wiped her face and said, "I am sorry." Day after day for weeks together, she maintained that same attitude of perfect friendliness. Six months passed. One night a turnkey on his way to lock the outer gates of the prison, saw this degraded woman deliberately kneel to kiss the floor of her cell, where the shadow of the matron had fallen a moment before, as she passed along on some errand of mercy.

It was the first drop in a coming shower. When the shower fell, like the gentle rain from heaven, like the quality of mercy which is twice blessed, blessing him that gives and him that takes, it melted the hard heart of that woman into a tender responsiveness. She had been turned about and faced toward the light by the patient kindness

of one who had caught the spirit of the Master. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps." He bore our sins in his body on the cross and by his stripes we are healed. Love never fails. Prophecies fail. Tongues cease. Knowledge vanishes away, for at best, we know in part. "Faith, hope, love last—and the greatest of these is love."

How have all the weak, willful, sinful lives been turned toward integrity, kindliness, purity? When we look back through the moral history of the race, we find that it has been accomplished straight along by the vicarious sacrifice of that love which gives itself that others may benefit thereby.

It is David Livingstone, a man of extraordinary ability, giving himself to the black people of the Dark Continent, that light might shine in that darkness. It is Maud Ballington Booth, a woman of culture and social position, giving herself first to the Salvation Army and then to the prisoners of America, that some ray of hope might come to men made desperate by the tragedy of their own lives. It is Wilfred Grenfell, a man of rare intelligence and professional skill, giving himself to a

lot of neglected, forgotten people on the coast of Labrador, that their hurts might be healed. It is the Good Shepherd, leaving the ninety and nine which are safe and going out to lay down his life in heroic bloody warfare with the wolves, that he might save the sheep which was lost. It is always and everywhere the outreach of unselfish affection, giving itself for somebody else and thereby becoming redemptive. Behold then on that central cross the Lamb of God giving himself that he might take away the world's sin.

Yonder in Belgium, a child was born in a home of comfort. He came of good stock and his family anticipated for him a life of prosperity and pleasure. But at the age of eighteen, he joined the Society of the Sacred Heart. When he finished his training, he asked to be sent as a missionary to the Hawaiian Islands. Here he was deeply moved by the sad condition of those who had been deported to the leper colony on the Island of Molo-kai. He wanted to minister to their need and he volunteered to take spiritual charge of that leper settlement. He knew that to live among those stricken people meant social ostracism and the end of any chance for preferment in his Church. "No matter," he said, "it is the call of God and of human need, and I am going."



He lived in close contact with those unhappy people for the rest of his days. He worked with his hands, as well as with his head and his heart. By his skillful appeals and by his heroic example, he secured for them from the Hawaiian Government better dwellings, better food, a better water supply. He organized games and forms of entertainment, that he might bring some cheer into those desolate lives. He preached to them the gospel of the Son of God and lived it among them in terms of faithful, heroic, unselfish action. He ate with them and drank with them and gave them the Holy Sacrament at the altar of his Lord.

He too contracted the dread disease of leprosy and died from it, disfigured almost beyond recognition, after twenty-six long years of devoted service. Like the apostle of old, "He bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus." He gave himself for them, not in one high hour of heroic self-abandon, but through all those long, hard, sad years of faithful ministry. His name was "Father Damien." He too had caught the spirit of his Lord and he brought fresh honor to the high calling of a Christian.

The meaning of that central cross is instantly apparent to anyone who has ever undertaken, in

serious fashion, to fight entrenched evil or to relieve the distress of the world. "There is no salvation from sin or from the misery which wrongdoing entails upon the guilty and, alas, upon the innocent as well, except through the voluntary sacrifice of some brave generous servant of human well being." When we reach the summit of all being, would we expect to find it otherwise with Him, in whom we live and move and are? He is the Living God. He lives a real life. He suffers in the wrongdoing of His children and gives Himself for them, that He may release them from the power of evil and bring them to Himself.

Every life has its own load to bear. But there is a Hand of help stretched out to us from the unseen. There is a Face, like our own faces only finer, looking down upon us with perfect understanding and an infinite sympathy. There is a Voice, vibrating with moral interest in us, saying, "Father, forgive them. I am come to seek and to save that which is lost." If men will lift up their hearts and walk in fellowship with the One to whom that hand and that face and that voice belong, victory is sure.

"Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. I will write upon him the name of my God,"

indicating his final allegiance. "And the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem," indicating the coming of that finer social order to which he stands pledged. "And I will write upon my new name"—"my new name" for him, indicating his capacity for that higher type of character yet to be achieved through the divine grace revealed for all time on that central cross on Calvary.

## 12. Is A Future Life Inevitable?

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If a man dies, does he live again, whether or no? Or is there such a thing as spiritual suicide? Is immortal life inevitable? Or is it rather a high privilege to be sought and won by great spiritual effort?

These questions have haunted the minds of men down through the ages. Their answers have not all been to the same effect by any means. Here was the greatest of the apostles, writing to the Christians at Rome and suggesting frankly that immortality might be conditional. "The wages of sin is death," final and complete for aught we know to the contrary. "Eternal life," on the other hand, "is the gift of God," to those who are prepared to receive it and use it aright. Here in this last chapter, let me take up again that ques-

tion as to whether immortal life is meant to be the universal experience of all mankind.

I shall look in three directions for my answers. What does the Bible say about it? We have moved quite away from the habit of trying to settle vital questions (even in the realm of morals and religion) by quoting chapter and verse. There is nothing final or conclusive in that method. Even so, without regarding the Scriptures as the court of last appeal, the words of these writers, many of them spiritual experts, have a certain weight. The unusual gift in religion means that "the sharpest eye can see for the whole ship. What that sharp eye sees can conceivably become the common property of the ship in just a little further sailing. The sharp eye sees farther and more distinctly, but the vision before the sharp eye can be described in terms intelligible to the common eye."

We are certainly bound to give careful consideration to the judgment of One "who spake as never man spake," who lived as none other ever has, who led his immediate associates to believe that he was still alive after they had seen him die in a public place upon a cross. Suppose that he did not know—that he was merely giving us his opin-

ion as the wisest and best man that ever lived! Even on the basis of that modest supposition, whose opinion would we rather trust than his?

What did these men in the Bible say about a natural, inherent immortality? They never affirmed it. Here is a whole body of teaching looking in just the opposite direction. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish"—the implication being that those who do not believe in him will perish—"but have eternal life." "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." No such promise is held out to those who do not follow him. "Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which a man may eat and not die." Then with a bit of bold, oriental symbolism, which startles and almost repels us, Jesus added, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." This means that unless we personally appropriate that quality of life which was in him, we perish.

"He that sows to his flesh, reaps corruption. He that sows to the Spirit"—and only he—"shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." The tares of the field, the chaff of the wheat, the unfruitful

branches of the vine (symbols of unworthy lives) are all burned up, and that is the last of them. If language means anything, surely that does not mean the everlasting continuance of those unworthy lives in pain, nor does it mean the final recovery of all those unworthy lives to righteousness and happiness. It means extinction. Sin's wage is death, final and complete it may be. Neither the Jewish nor the Christian Scriptures teach the natural, inherent immortality of all mankind.

It will be understood that I am not quoting these passages of Scripture as having final authority. I ceased many years ago to believe in any form of religion which rests its claims upon some external authority—that does not get us anywhere. But the words of these spiritual experts must have a certain weight when we are making up our minds in the absence of any final proof, either positive or negative, as to what we shall believe about a future life.

It is significant that the main trend of New Testament teaching is to the effect that those lives which refuse to be developed on the spiritual side, suffer what is there called "the second death." When any man by his own bearing and attitude, says, "Eat, drink, be merry, have a good time, for

tomorrow we die and come to the end of it all," he may indeed be outlining with fearful accuracy his own sorry destiny. On the other hand, the New Testament teaches that the outcome of faith and hope and love will be life, life that is life indeed, life abundant, life that lasts. "Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ."

What does reason say? Here is a world administered apparently for moral ends. "The way of the transgressor is hard," sometimes right off, sometimes later, but in the final outcome, it is hard. Make full allowance for apparent exceptions and puzzling situations, the way of transgression, by and large, remains hard. The way of righteousness, on the other hand, is a way of peace and honor and advancement. It looks as if there were some moral purpose behind all that in this world of ours.

Through long periods of development, there have come these finer forms of life which we call human. Apparently that is what the world order had in view all along. Since man appeared here on the globe, no higher species has emerged to displace him, but only finer and finer types of human life. What permanent significance would a life persistently evil have for a world administered



for moral ends? After due trial had been made of its controlling purposes, would it not seem reasonable that such a life would pass out and disappear, as other outworn, outmoded forms of life have disappeared? What reason would there be for maintaining in existence a whole section of a world administered for moral ends peopled with those who were in open rebellion against the will of their Maker and opposed to the very purposes of their own existence?

More than that, we know that the life of aspiration and kindly service enlarges and enriches the nature. Why should not that process go on and on unto life eternal? We know also that the life of selfishness and spiritual indifference cramps and impoverishes the nature. Why should not that process continue until that life by its own perverse neglect is reduced to nothingness, until it reaches the vanishing point and disappears? Not by the arbitrary decree of some Day of Judgment, but by the steady operation of these well-known moral laws, the final wage of wrongdoing would be death.

It is reasonable to suppose that eternal life issues from character; and character comes by wise and right choices. If it were only a question of getting people into a city with pearly gates and

golden streets, if it were only a question of wearing white robes and starry crowns, all that could be easily managed by some friendly Deity. But if eternal life depends upon a certain fitness for it in terms of character, and if character comes, as we know it does, only by wise and right choices, then the matter of destiny rests with each individual. Immortal life may naturally be an achievement, a high privilege to be sought and won by spiritual effort, rather than the natural inevitable possession of every human being regardless of the quality of his inner life.

What could a fish do out of water or a bird cut off from the air? Both these forms of life would speedily perish because of their inability to cope with the situation where they found themselves. What would an unrenewed man, devoid of spiritual life, do in that unseen world? Would he not find himself a fish out of water, a bird cut off from the air, unable to meet the conditions of that sort of world? Not by some scheme of mechanical retribution but by the steady operation of the laws of cause and effect, would not he also, by his lack of spiritual fitness to cope with that situation, fade out of the picture? Spiritual indifference and neglect is sin, and sin's wage is death.

For thirty-six years, Mark Hopkins was the

president of Williams College. He was an able executive, a distinguished educator and a philosopher in his own right. There came to him one day a very confident sophomore, who said to him with an air of finality, "Doctor, I am firmly convinced that I am not an immortal soul."

The wise man looked him over and with a kindly twinkle in his eye, replied, "Well, perhaps not! You ought to know. I am."

The sophomore may have been defining accurately the fate of every unrenewed, undeveloped nature. It may be that no one has anything more than the capacity for that higher destiny which is yet to be achieved through reverent obedient trust and heartfelt devotion to the God of all grace. I believe with all my heart that if anyone will face toward the light and walk in it and work toward the highest he sees, he will enter into life eternal. I find no sufficient reason for asserting that those who persist in lives of evil will survive.

What would science say? It has already occurred to you how naturally this idea of a conditional immortality fits in with the scientific doctrine of the survival of the fittest. Through long periods of orderly development, certain forms of life have survived because apparently they were

fit to survive. Other forms of life, which once had large place in the world, have gone to the wall and disappeared.

Look back upon the periods when those gigantic saurians and mastodons were fighting their furious battles. It would seem unthinkable that those huge brutes could ever pass away to make room for the gentler forms of life, sheep, cows and human beings which we know today. Somehow the gentler creatures, with their finer nervous and mental equipment, won out over the big brutes and here they are! Was that what the Master meant, when he said, "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth." He may have seen that gentleness has a survival value which cruelty lacks—therefore it has the future in its hands.

From the very beginning, the main movement of this world-order seems to have been toward higher and ever higher forms of human life. The record in the rocks reads that way. Man has not been replaced by some higher species. Man has not advanced beyond the physical strength of the cave men. He is not today the equal in physical strength of some of the gorillas and anthropoid apes. But in the delicate vibrations of the gray matter in his brain which make possible his intel-

lectual life, what an advance. Still more in the development of his spiritual life! How the magic, the superstition, the horrid practices of those earlier forms of religion have been replaced by nobler types of religion. How much has been added to man's store of humane impulse, in his treatment of women and children, in his care for the needy and the suffering, in his readiness to coöperate with others for the common good. How much more we know today about the value of doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with our Maker! Look back three thousand years, six thousand years, and see the moral and spiritual advance! The fittest have survived.

And the end is not yet. Up out of the primeval slime have come these finer forms of life which roam the earth today. Up out of the struggles of our own brutish ancestors, who fought together like the beasts that perish, have come these fairer types of human life. And still the end is not yet. In the onward march of life, now that human personality has already come so far, may we not believe that it will go still farther?

We are still moving toward nobler forms of spiritual life which are destined to transcend these commonplace moralities which suffice to keep us out of jail. They do not exhaust our full capacity

for spiritual advance. In that onward, upward march of the human spirit, we may well believe that those forms of life which are fit to survive, will survive. We may also think that those forms of life which refuse the way of advance, which refuse to strive for those spiritual values commonly esteemed supreme and lasting, will fall out by the way. Sin's wage is death—eternal life is the high privilege offered to those who strive to enter in at the strait gate, that they may eat from the tree of life.

How the whole costume and phrasing of this doctrine of a future life has changed within the last forty years! We make less of the crisis and more of the process in the development of spiritual life. We think less of the arbitrary decrees of some Supernatural Being and more of the gradual working out of those forces which bring with them their own rewards and penalties. We lay more stress upon those qualities of mind and heart which belong to religious character, than we do upon all forms, creeds and emotional upheavals. "By their fruits, ye shall know them," the Master said. By that which grows steadily out of a man, as the result of a certain inner life principle! Be-

cause of this changed emphasis all along the line, how much more vital religion has become.

Faith in a future life does not admit of demonstration. It is a future event, and as such it cannot be demonstrated. Our belief in it must lie always in the realm of moral faith. Even if we were to accept at their full face value the statements of those who have been working along the line of psychical research,—personally I do not place upon them such a high appraisal,—even if we believe that they have been in actual communication with the dead, that would not prove that all men will survive the shock of death.

“Here is a flock of sheep on the bank of a stream,” as George A. Gordon once said.<sup>1</sup> “Some of them swim safely across and bleat to their brethren behind, telling them, as plainly as can be, that they are still alive. Even so, the sheep which have not yet tried the stream are a good deal concerned as to their fate, when they move out into the dark waters.”

But when we face the best there is in the world-order which enfolds us, we gain courage. Recall the argument of John Fiske! He was a man who knew his way about in the world of scientific investigation and in the world of philosophical in-

<sup>1</sup> *Immortality and the New Theodicy*, p. 7.

quiry. Charles Darwin called him "the ablest exponent of organic evolution on the American continent." He began as a materialist, but came to be a firm believer in God, in the reality of spiritual experience, and in a future life.

"I find everywhere," he says in his little book, *Through Nature to God*, "that the internal adjustment has been brought about so as to harmonize with some actually existing external fact. The eye was developed in response to the existence of radiant light—there were objects to be seen. The ear was developed in response to the actual existence of acoustic vibrations—there were sounds to be heard, language, music and all the rest. The mother's love came in response to the infant's needs. Now if this relation established in the morning twilight of man's existence between the human soul and a world invisible, is a relation where only the subjective term is real and the objective term is unreal, it is without precedent in the whole work of creation. If man's capacity for fellowship with God is real only at this end of the line and unreal at the other end, then it is an absolute break in the whole method of nature as we have learned it."

Suppose we should accept that as the general method according to which things have come to



be as they are! Suppose we should accept it as the general method according to which things will become, as we shall find them farther on! What about those people who refuse to make that "internal adjustment" of capacity to actually existing external spiritual facts? What about those who deliberately turn their backs upon all the high privileges of religious faith for the development of their spiritual natures? What about those who frankly disregard what seems to be this longer, vaster plan for humanity? What warrant have we for thinking that they will continue in that warped and cramped existence through all the ages?

I would not undertake any dogmatic assertion as to their fate. It is never wise to be too sure when one does not know.

Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be,  
They are but broken lights of Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

I do feel, however, that in the light of the teaching of Scripture, in the face of reason and experience, and in the presence of these analogies furnished by physical science, here are considerations worthy of our careful thought. If immortal

life is not a natural, inherent possession, but a certain quality of being which springs from the union of the human with the divine (of which we have the supreme example and pledge in Jesus Christ), how that very fact challenges us to strive. "I count all things but loss," the great apostle said, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, if by any means, I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

"As in Adam," in the unrenewed animal nature of man, "all die, so in Christ," in that higher, finer quality of being which comes through union with him, "all shall be made alive." What reassurance comes to anyone who is doing his modest best to live the life of the Spirit. What added confidence comes to those who, with their varied abilities, methods, opportunities, are working together for the coming of that kingdom which is not mere eating and drinking, buying and selling, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the divine spirit.

It all looks forward to that vision of "a multitude which no man could number, of all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues." They stood before the Throne "clothed with white

robes," indicating the sort of lives they had been living, and "with palms in their hands" proclaiming the victory won. They were singing with all their hearts, "Blessing and honor and glory and power and wisdom and might be unto him that sitteth upon the throne." The kingdoms of this world had all become kingdoms of God and of His Christ.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan, which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go, not like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.



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